

BY NIPPON'S LOTUS PONDS

PEN PICTURES OF
REAL JAPAN

By MATTHIAS
KLEIN





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STATELY LOTUS IN TEMPLE COURT

BY
NIPPON'S LOTUS
PONDS

Pen Pictures of Real Japan

BY
MATTHIAS KLEIN
Formerly Missionary and Government Teacher in Japan

Illustrated



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FOREWORD

“**S**OJOURNERS in Japan, with regard to their feelings toward the country and its people, must pass through three stages,” said a keenly observing Westerner, long resident in Japan, to me. “In the first stage, the new arrival, prepared to find the country almost supernal, views everything through rose-coloured glasses. Next comes—and it is liable to come quickly—the period of disillusionment, when the pendulum swings to the other extreme, often leading to a complete revulsion of feeling and causing an utter inability to recognize qualities of which Japan may rightly be proud. The third stage is the happy medium, where with clarified vision both sides are conceded; and where grey and sombre colours, as well as those of brighter hues, are laid on in their proper proportion.”

The writings of globe-trotters and tourists almost invariably reflect the first stage, and the many extravagant and often laughable statements found in them may only be excused because of the writers' brevity of time. They must necessarily pen their impressions on the spur of the moment, and every one knows how very often first impressions are incorrect.

Then we have seen some productions which seemed tinged with overmuch sarcasm and lacking in kindly charity; but assuredly only those who have safely arrived at the third stage—among whom we humbly hope to be numbered—are competent to judge impartially. However, because of a well-meant endeavour to pass over unpleasant features, some writers who *have* resided for longer periods in the country naturally ignore the more gloomy aspects.

Aside from historical works, most of the many descriptive books on Japan and its people which the writer has examined have largely, if not entirely, been confined to the cities and the regular beaten tracks. Whatever the Japanese themselves have to say on this subject, strongly indicates that they prefer to dwell on city life, considering it more to their credit. Art albums and gaily-coloured postcards nowadays depict very little of the real rural life of interior Japan. “Do not simply praise our magnificent scenery,” they say. “We want to hear about our progress in modern improvements, science, etc.”

True, the careful observer recognizes what gigantic strides the government has made, but if really acquainted with the heart of Nippon—the rural population—which represents three-fourths of the Mikado’s subjects, he cannot but feel that this country has yet a stupendous task before her; which sentiment is strongly voiced by statesmen, financiers

and educators, as well as missionaries and religious leaders.

The following sketches are the result of a careful collection of facts and incidents which have been jotted down during a sojourn in the interior, comprising the entire time of our residence in Japan.

Though making no pretensions to completeness, we have ventured to speak out our whole mind on almost every point, except where, for the sake of propriety, certain things were better left untold. We have not tried to tell what we have beheld or enjoyed for the mere sake of sightseeing; with the exception of a few educational trips, our subject-matter has been collected in a real concrete form while prosecuting the work of a Christian missionary.

We have travelled on the frailest barks to remotest island nooks and villages; had many a hair-breadth escape from shipwrecks and breakneck tumbles over steep precipices; rode on wheel or walked over long stretches of lonely mountain roads in the darkest of nights; slept in uncanny old Buddhist temples and eaten "broths of abominable things" in farmers' cottages; and have thus come into unusually close contact with priest and peasant.

Along with the Bible, tracts and cornet, another faithful companion has been the camera, and some of its productions we are happy to present to the reader, illustrating the narrative more fully.

M. K.

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I

“O-MATSURI”

WHENCE this throng? Where are they going? Gaily-dressed grown people and happy children in flowered kimonos and fluttering ribbons, are clattering on *geta* toward yonder massive temple canopied and encircled by stately pines and cedars and evergreen groves of sweet-scented magnolia and camellia, festooned with purple wistaria and luxuriant ivy vines. To-day is *O-matsuri*—the grand festival of the *Nichiren*—signifying “Lotus of the sun.” This is the name of the founder of a prominent Buddhist sect, and was derived from a dream of the sun on a lotus flower, which the mother of this priest claimed to have had ere his birth.

We follow this festive throng through a high-roofed temple gate with clumsy, rustic doors, on each side of which stand the formidable-looking, gigantic *Nio*, guardian gods; our path leading along an exquisitely trimmed evergreen hedge, and under

long-limbed cherry trees, whose large double-pink blossoms we admired a few months before.

From a thicket to the right comes the pitiful wailing cry of a devotee, who, on the stone pavement surrounding a popular shrine, is making some fifty or one hundred circuits as prescribed by the priest for the recovery of his sick child. To the left a woman with a baby strapped on her back, tarries in front of a life-sized wooden god; first she rubs the idol's face, whose features have almost been worn away by her predecessors, then touches her own eyes and face and shoulders, and administers the same treatment to her child.

On smooth-shaven boards fastened to another near-by shrine are written in the Japanese script about forty or fifty repetitions of the word *me*—meaning eyes, and again a similar number of the word *chichi* (milk). The former is a request for the healing of the eyes; the latter some mother's prayer for a supply of nature's nourishment for her pining infant.

But the centre of attraction seems to be one of the large temples, whence comes “the roll of the drums.” Here hard-faced priests, in spectral robes and bare feet, with tones and gestures hideous to a stranger are busily engaged in their holiday per-

formance. Were one a believer in ghosts, such sights would certainly make his flesh creep. Now and then these priests enliven things a little more by the wizard-like sound of two sticks beating together or by tapping a bell.

At each of two beer-barrel-shaped drums near the entrance, an acolyte can be seen incessantly beating for an hour or so and keeping splendid time to the chanting of the sacred formula, "*Namumiyoho-rengo-kyo*," which all the devotees use as an invocation and which can be seen inscribed on many tombstones, meaning, "Oh the scripture of the lotus of the wonderful law." When it seemed that the drummers were about to cease they renewedly called their vim into action and beat with a little faster tempo, and with energy and perseverance which reminds one of the exertions of the priests of Baal.

These priests, the ingredients of whose religion largely consist of grovelling, fortune-telling superstitions and "good-luck" charms, are by tradition and sentiment the natural enemy of the Christian missionary. They are not men of violence, and seldom come into open conflict with him, though ever his sworn opposers. Viewing the fanatical zeal of priest and people at festivals now, suggests the

query, “To what heights of frenzy must their devotion have led them five hundred years ago?” Or when they dedicated their once magnificent temples and pagodas, most of which to-day are very old and present such a gloomy and neglected appearance.

A massive temple this is, having cost a princely sum; but like all other temples in Japan, it is constructed entirely of wood, and its exterior tarnished by the hand of time. Curiously ornamented grey tiles cover its roof; over the main porch and underneath the long, low eaves and architraves are excellent carvings of fabulous dragons, flowers, spirited storks, birds flitting over the waves of the sea and tortoises swimming through it; in the centre of the nave hangs a magnificent, gilt baldachin, adorned with glittering pendants—the entire producing an extremely imposing effect.

The teeming thousands of rustic worshippers press up the broad stairway of the temple and cast their votive offerings, usually of the lowest denomination, into a large receptacle, which many, missing, scatter over the floor and keep an acolyte busy sweeping them up. The throng then in turn jerk a long, clumsy rope, rattling an unmusical gong, and with bowed head and palms held closely together, they reverently worship.

In the meantime a large concourse moves on over artistically curved stone bridges and gathers round the beautiful lotus ponds, where out of the slimy, stagnant water, from between the stately, classical leaves, the glorious, waxen-petalled, white and pink lilies greet their æsthetic admirers. But these have long been preceded by the “élite” of all these zealots—those who in the hush of the morning twilight came trudging out to these lotus pools to see the buds open and “hear the eerie, exquisite music of the petals unfolding.” It is the symbol of the new birth of the soul, they say; that crystal pure flower rising up out of the mire, metaphors the soul’s transfiguration, which though growing in sin shall soon bloom in Paradise.

At gala days of this sort old and new Japan meet in conglomeration. In booths are cinematograph shows and graphophone concerts, and close by in front of a shrine are worshippers clapping their hands, striving to wake up the gods. A few steps away, the performers on the old-fashioned Japanese banjo, the *samisen*, though with but a monotonous “tom-tom,” like spellbinders hold the crowd. On top of a high scaffolding, composed of thick bamboo poles, sits a man pounding an unmusical drum, invoking the favour of the gods in behalf of the

burly, almost nude wrestlers performing in a compound below. In other little booths cheap candies, toys and gaudy little novelties are sold to the eager, pleasure-loving crowds that throng into town from village, valley and mountain side.

The temple grounds, as well as the narrow streets, are decorated by these dexterous-fingered Japanese with many-coloured festoons and flags, evergreen arches and artificial trees. But equally gay is the scene at night, when great, glowing red paper lanterns, like fiery racemes, strung thickly on either side of the streets, remind one of some fairyland. There is one house, however, in the centre of this turmoil, which by such decorations does not manifest its sympathy with this idol festival. It is a Christian chapel with its front thrown wide open, where several native evangelists with the missionary preach alternately for hours to the passing multitudes.

To-day the priests have plied a rattling trade. It is late at night and we long for rest; but a horde of zealous devotees in the temple yard, with a monstrous, queer-shaped drum, incessantly torment our ears with that discordant, nerve-racking din. Wondrous the contrast between this ear-splitting noise and the soft, mellow-toned temple bell. Be

it at dawn of day or in the evening twilight, or when the town folk and peasants are toiling, from yonder woody hillock, across clustering huts and villages and on over mud-dyked, terraced rice fields, roll the rich, sweet notes of ancient Oriental bells, rung by swinging a large horizontally suspended pole against the side. But, after all, this sweetness, as it comes and dies away with a few echoes, when we know that it only means a helpless mortal bowed before gods of stone, causes a shudder, and we seem to hear the tolling of some funeral dirge.

II

THE VILLAGE BARBER

A PROPOS of a strenuous day of rattling a big pair of horse-clippers over many bristling heads, mowing down a few stray plants off the men's faces, drooping eyelids, ears and nostrils; the nape of women's necks and eyebrows, etc., we caught our neighbour barber whetting his razor for the fray. He went about it in this fashion: in front of his low-eaved shop, up against a cedar post, he stuck his little, handleless sort of a razor, and holding it in position with his body, applied to it the magic grit of a big file, till beautiful sparks imitating shooting stars induced us to quickly draw near and see and as quickly leave again. How fortunate for his customers that he has no heavy beards to practise on!

Barbers in the rural districts being equally proficient(?) in modes of Western hairdressing, we have for convenience sake selected this neighbour, but in order to avoid a gaping crowd and for sanitary reasons we call him to the house instead of

invading his shop. On his maiden trip, as well as all consecutive calls, he came with an old chest drawer, containing his entire outfit. When conditioning that the tools used must first be thoroughly cleansed, he triumphantly responded that "according to the law" the barber disinfects his tools once a week! Even this rule, we fear, is more honoured in the breach than the observance. However, he always submits them to a strong carbolic solution in our presence, though we had to strongly remonstrate against his using a long-haired duster which, in his shop, he has whipped over the skull of every "Tom, Dick and Harry." The barbers' razors, shears and clippers are simply transmitters of all sorts of disease germs. Children's heads are often covered with blotches of eczema or some scrofulous eruption, and those hairless scars can be seen on the heads of students and grown men almost anywhere. There is seldom an attempt made to relieve the poor children of this malady, as it is popularly supposed to have a beneficial effect.

Among his variety of tools, of which it is necessary to use but one or two at our home, this neighbour has one primitive article which we always decline without a trial. It is a sort of circular

currycomb which the manufacturer obtains with the least effort from thick bamboo poles, sawing cup-like sections from the joints and cutting coarse teeth in the rim. Just the thing to scratch a hog's back with, though intended for a more "elevated" use. Passing by some barber shop we have often been amazed at the contented expression of the fellow in the chair, while the tonsorial artist plied this instrument over his close-cropped head; when a corn cob would be a feather brush in comparison.

Upon receiving his fee and about ready to depart, this handy neighbour respectfully sucks in his breath, bows his "*Sayonara*," and as solemn-faced as a deacon walks away. But no sooner is his back turned than his countenance changes; for, peeping around a corner, we see him indulging in a broad smile, and he is evidently revelling in amusement over the foreigner's cranky sanitary notions.

But though our polite friend is not up to date in practice, he ought to be in theory. For seven years there has hung in his shop, for decoration rather than example, a large print of about twenty heads, representing different modes of hairdressing. In one row are the Russian, Italian, American, English and French brands; the remainder are all

Japanese, denominated as follows, "Teacher, Scholar, Nobility, General, Actor, Young man, Gentleman, Engineer, Company, Merchant, Policeman, Gallant, Strong man, Painter, Lawyer." A marvellous and ample assortment; though largely the product of the artist's imagination.

Now and then a grandsire, a relic of olden times, can be seen with the front of his head shaven and the back hair gathered in a quaint little pipe-stem queue drawn forward over the shaven patch. Sometimes careless fellows wear their coarse hair two or three inches long in a simple, refractory and undivided mop, but almost all of the common classes, whose skulls may have never seen a fine-tooth comb or brush, have their hair closely cropped. What remains sticks up like bits of black wire and causes no wonder that the barber must manipulate his heavy clippers with both hands. This close cropping reveals more fully the Mongolian type of features, and as a rule the abnormally developed skulls of even the smallest boys, whose physiognomy strongly bespeaks an extra amount of conceit as well as a highly combative disposition.

After a hair-cut, the face, forehead, nose and ears are shaven till smooth and shiny. The countenance, taking on a more ruddy colour, may be

made a little more attractive by a touch of powder. Dudes and belles, *geisha* in particular, are in great dread of sunburns, and resort to powder for face and hands. This reminds us of the tooth powder; rarely can one see an even set of teeth—unquestionably due to the diet—rice, vegetables and delicacies as well, all soft and mushy. However, since the innovation of modern dentistry, coolie and rikisha-man, even, have their toothbrushes and a plentiful supply of cheap powder. Uncomely though their faces be, they reveal not a little amount of personal vanity.

Among the more up to date a hair-cut with scissors is in demand, and pompadours being natural and easily fashioned, are therefore the most popular. A few, however, who with the assistance of hair-oil have succeeded in cultivating a part, are now and then designated as *high kara*, meaning “high collar.” Though this term may sometimes be used in derision of some dude, who with an aristocratic air stalks through a company of yokels on the village byways, it is more generally applied to all such who seek, though often so vaguely, to imitate Western modes of life.

At a gathering of some young men whom we knew, one of them being present with hair parted

was provokingly ridiculed by the leader; but to our amazement this latter gentleman came to our house a few days later, his newly parted hair literally dripping with grease and sickening with perfume. The cabin boy of the steamer had such a copious supply of a strong wintergreen-scented pomade lavished on his obstinate hair, which glittered like a raven's wing, that even his passing shadow, outside the cabin door, caused my meagre spirits to involuntarily shrink and to repel such fertile breezes.

Once while in a bicycle shop we caught sight of a fellow appearing in the doorway who had just hailed from the barber. Smallpox had pimpled his face into a sort of pebbled leather, but we were more amazed at his glistening hair. Like the diamond dewdrops of the grass blades in the morning, so every spear of his wiry hair was adorned with jewels of oil, which flashing sunbeams transformed into a veritable halo. Then with self-complacency and in a characteristic Japanese manner he brushed his stout hand back over his head, and as when rubbing one's finger over a dampened toothbrush—only magnified—sprays of dewy vapour filled the air. How bewildered some of these young scions look when told that good taste in the West does not

countenance such loud-scented oils! What must be thought of the women's coiffure, dressed semi-weekly and freshly oiled, though seldom washed—not more than once a month? Then pity the numberless and often sore-eyed little tots whose faces are constantly brushed by the greasy and unkempt hair of those on whose backs they are carried.

While a goodly number of the more refined ladies, teachers of Girls' Schools, etc., by precept and practice discourage the use of this sort of hairdressing, it is very evident that most of the gentler sex, in retaining their ancient coiffure, now as always, also consider a lavish supply of oil a necessary adjunct. Only a comparatively diminutive number can enhance their beauty with pomades—rose, lavender, wintergreen and similarly scented oils. The common Japanese woman resorts to a very cheap, home-made product, and woe betide the olfactory organs should one happen to pass through a crowded third-class compartment on steamboat or train. The masculine half of this class, however, are hard-shell “Japanesey” enough to ever deny themselves of this luxury. Evidences of oil seem to be everywhere—too often are they found on kimono collars, also on the erstwhile white aprons of barbers and barberesses, which, whether their wearers remain



MODES OF LADIES' HAIR DRESSING



THE WEDDING CEREMONY

in the shop, or move from house to house in quest of customers, present an unsightly black shine. Hitherto it has been the custom to shave the infant's head on the eighth day. Among the boys this is periodically continued until they are ten or twelve; for this reason they are quaintly called "*Bon-san*," after the Buddhist priests, who always have their heads shaven. With the girls this seemingly cruel practice is partially discontinued after the third year; thereafter, according to the parents' taste, locality and station, the hair is dressed in different modes.

Quite often these tonsorial operations are performed by the father or mother. Through the open paper *shoji*, with its many finger-poked holes inviting repair, we saw a persevering dame with a handleless and not over-sharp excuse of a razor, in spasmodic strokes shaving the skull of a dark-brown-faced dear girlie of but a single summer. The process must have felt anything but pleasing, and the brave child would not have so readily revealed the Spartan fire of her race had not the two strong hands of her older sister, like a relentless vise, held this black-locked head in their inflexible grasp. However, this work is not accomplished in a minute, and sometimes youngsters with only one

hemisphere denuded, in loose kimono romping about the narrow streets, suggests that either a successful dash for liberty and escape from torture has been made, or else that more pressing duties or a blunt razor have forced an adjournment.

III

WHERE CUPID'S WINGS ARE CLIPPED

THOUGH the numerical strength of Christianity in Japan is comparatively small, its influence on the national customs is most strikingly revealed; not only so in the moral and intellectual uplifting of woman and the caring for the feeble, etc., but also in revolutionizing a goodly number of most unsightly aspects of Japanese life, such as plural marriage. Still the matrimonial field has not yet by any means been freed from all the noxious and destructive weeds, some of which have from centuries past wrought havoc with the happiness of homes.

Here marriage licenses are unknown; the only legal requirements being the consent of the parents, and that a post-nuptial report be given the authorities. This consent is necessary to a legal marriage until the age of twenty-five and thirty in the woman and man respectively. Still in numerous cases such sanction would have been very immaterial but for the matrimonial aspirant's concern regarding lega-

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cies, for instance. Thus, though a dual life may have been lived for some time, as a rule the parents' consent will be solicited sooner or later, that the marriage contract might become legally ratified by the authorities. Where no license is required, divorces are also obtained without difficulty—on the part of the husband at least—and are granted for any reason.

“But what sort of matrimonial contract is generally in force among the common people?” we asked a well-informed Japanese. “There are not a few instances where a mutual promise only is considered necessary,” he replied; “or the signing of a little agreement by the contracting parties putting the impress of their right thumb, dipped in India ink, upon the paper. In Japan, where in business contracts the individual stamp is of equal validity to a written agreement in the West, in nuptial affairs, the scratch of the nail even (not on the face—on paper) is sufficient. At times some attractive *geisha*, or others of easy virtue, may elect to be the mistress of some man; and in sealing the contract, such may cut off a finger tip, or with a penknife draw a few drops of blood into a cup of *sake* which is then mutually drunk.”

As to the eligibility of candidates entering the

marriage pale, there is manifestly little compunction of conscience. Here, where insanity and leprosy play a remarkable rôle, the infected parties selfishly seek for better blood. Thus whenever such a proposal is made—to the parents, of course—there involuntarily rises as one of the first queries, “Is there any insanity or leprosy contaminating that house or person?” And forthwith secret agents are put on the track. But on an island of 200,000 people, for instance, where hereditary diseases have for centuries been perpetuated mainly by constant intermarriages among its own inhabitants, how can a parent, though ever so wary, be sure of escaping this dreaded calamity?

In Japan almost all marriages are made through the medium of the sly old *Naka-dachi*, or middleman, who acts as representative of the god of match-making; this important personage may also be some cunning, wrinkled-faced female. Mr. Hirano, one of our friends, and a rice merchant in moderate circumstances, has four daughters. “Would to the gods they were sons,” thinks he. The oldest has already been married to a worthy youth, who, according to Japanese custom, has become the adopted son of this home, assuming the family name of his wife. But the second daughter,

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another marriageable lassie, though but yet in her teens, is to the anxious old folks another reminder of their parental duty. What is to be done? Mr. Hirano dons his silken kimono, and, on this occasion not forgetting his felt hat so seldom worn, sallies forth.

Squatting behind the paper *shoji* at the *Naka-dachi's* little cottage, he commissions him to find a suitable consort for his daughter. After having shrugged his shoulders a few times, the match-maker, peering wisely through his horn-rimmed glasses, with an assuring smile names to Mr. Hirano a dutiful son of a truly worthy family. After much parleying and a number of interviews with the parents of both houses, the *Naka-dachi* has at last reached the point where he may arrange for the *mi-ai*—mutual seeing. The fire of love in the hearts of this youthful pair, which has hitherto been smouldering under most rigid supervision, now leaps into a flickering flame. Accompanied by their parents and the *Naka-dachi*, they meet for the first time at a cheerful tea-house, where pattering little waterfalls, rich foliage and decorative paper lanterns add a touch of romance to the occasion. The young lassie's hair is done in *Shimada magi*, a coiffure considered very charming. Here not one

moment is lost; by darting sidelong glances, young man and maiden bring mental struggles into play and form opinions of each other. Their elders, however, may express their likes and dislikes. How frigid and—provoking! The pair who are the most interested have little or nothing to say in the matter, and one imagines the whispering notes of connubial affection are but faintly heeded. Though meeting at a tea-house, the fortunes of this critical hour must not be gambled away, even with a cup of tea.

The old folks having ended their inspection with pleasing results, all is joy—though by no means a Niagara. But pitiful as all this seems to us, yet this bride is fortunate compared with many of her sisters, who are compelled by their inflexible parents, in spite of protests, to marry some man whom they know and heartily despise. Next in order was the exchange of betrothal presents, called *yuino*. The young man presented his future wife with a lovely *obi*, silk kimono, a small willow cask, edible seaweed, dried cuttlefish, flax, etc. The *Naka-dachi*, leading a caravan of red-faced, sandaled coolies burdened with these presents, made a halt at the low-eaved front of the bride's home. The curiosity of the entire neighbourhood was aroused, and, as is customary, a gaping crowd with craning necks

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speedily packed the street. Sometimes, however, such presents as the above are dispensed with and a sum of money ranging from ten to a few hundred *yen*, depending on circumstances, is presented.

Are there any almanacs in Japan? Yes, and also fortune-tellers, and rather than preferring a rosy June day, these are consulted regarding the most auspicious day for the wedding. After nightfall on that memorable day, the almond-eyed young lady, with powdered face and painted lips, donned her wedding hood and bridal finery, and, accompanied by her relatives, left the parental roof for that of the bridegroom. The procession advanced in jinrikishas until they approached a queer-named street where Mr. Ogi, the groom's father, lives. Here the bridal party was joyously hailed by a host of relatives and friends, all clad in the strictest ceremonial silken garments, each carrying a cheerfully beaming paper lantern. In Japan, except among Christians, there is absolutely no religious service connected with marriage. Of late, however, though only among the higher classes, the practice of solemnizing the event in a Shinto temple has come into vogue.

Amid an immense throng of curious onlookers, the mincing bride was conducted by chubby little



OLD-TIME MUSICIANS SERENADING WEDDING PARTY

maids—all dressed in lilac and other dainty colours—into the brilliantly lighted room, where she was greeted by the groom. Seated opposite each other on the mats at the *Shima-dai*, a kind of three-legged table but a foot high, on which were effigies of an aged couple under pine trees, they alternately drank nine little cups of *sake*; and this constituted the marriage ceremony. The nuptial knot being tied, they now proceeded to the adjoining, spacious room, where they were ceremoniously greeted by the expectant host of guests, who squatted on cushions lined the four sides of the place. These restive guests, who during the nuptial ceremony sat in solemn silence as though asphyxiated, while now partaking of a plenteous repast and imbibing not a little *sake*, became increasingly talkative and hilarious; so much so that to him who stood without it seemed like a veritable stampede, and which continued late into the night. In the meantime, however, the bridal pair withdrew to their own apartment, where they were served a private dinner; one indispensable article in the menu being clam soup, which although a common dish in Japan, because of the fact that each pair of shell hinges never fit any other, is considered a felicitous symbol of wedded life.

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But this event (though of but yesterday) having transpired in a prosperous yet provincial hamlet of the interior, custom decreed it that the ivory-white teeth of the bride must be painted an ugly black and her hair done in a peculiar kind of coiffure, signifying that its wearer has entered the portals of wedlock; for the same reason her youthful face was increasingly disfigured by the eyebrows being shaven. The heathenish practice of blacking teeth, however, is more and more falling into disuse through the proper example set by the former Empress. Mr. G. Watanabe, whose booklet, "Marriage Customs in Japan," corroborates the above description, also relates quite a number of other quaint and outlandish customs pertaining to this subject. Some of these, though frankly narrated by their own writers, being neither a credit to the race nor by Western rules of propriety allowable to reprint, we will mention only two.

But a few miles from where we have spent quite a number of years, a young man, when desirous of a helpmeet, has his most intimate friends betake themselves in search of one. Having found a suitable maiden, they first endeavour to persuade her to enter the young man's dwelling; but when this mild measure fails, they proceed to carry her in

by force. Her teeth must now be blackened, and in case she refuses, the dye used for this purpose is forced into her mouth by one of her abductors; thenceforth she is regarded as irrevocably engaged. In another prefecture, it is not deemed advisable for the young man to get the first glimpse of his future bride in holiday dress. If she is a farmer's daughter, the aspiring swain strolls by while she is weeding in the narrow-diked paddy field, her clothing bespattered and hands and feet besmeared with black mud.

IV

HAPPY NEW YEAR

NEW YEAR festivities in Japan occupy a good deal of time. Since the beginning of the Enlightened Era, our Western New Year has also come into vogue, and being officially recognized as a national holiday, is to-day celebrated by most of the city and town folk. But peasants and country people in general are much inclined to cling to the old New Year, as well as other time-worn customs. Being reckoned by the lunar calendar, it usually falls six weeks behind ours. One recent year the police authorities forbade the celebration of the old New Year. No flag was to be stuck out, no *mochi* pounded, etc., and all meekly acquiesced. In the rural districts, however, this change greatly conflicts with the hitherto iron-bound custom of settling business accounts at the close of the old calendar year. And that old customs die hard was clearly proven by almost one and all when the following year the authorities relaxed the above stringent measures somewhat,

and in certain sections where the legal New Year was almost ignored, the outlawed one was virtually reinstated with old-time zest and much merry-making.

But the commercial excuse for this retrogression does not seem to be as weighty as the religious one, for it should be remembered that the Japanese treat this event as something more than a mere holiday. Here they devoutly worship the New Year god. At every gate entrance the farmer places little mounds of fresh clay from the hillside, on which smouldering incense sticks are planted. As to the fishermen, they scour the unpainted sampans inside and out and stick up a pine branch in the centre of each; in the tiny straw-woven cup or little wooden tray fastened to either side of the hut entrances, samples of the New Year feast are scrupulously offered.

Here authority is all in all. This is clearly proven in many other instances besides the above-mentioned police regulation. The people are taught to implicitly obey their superiors, be it from the heart or not, and very often without perceiving the shadow of a reason. The *chef* in the railroad dining car, whom we observed wiping his perspiring face with the dish towel, thought this nothing

strange, but was first of all concerned about the "rule," that with this cloth he must wipe the drinking glasses. The tax official, by a pure mistake of his own, supplied us with a tax bill intended for another person; but on account of our failure to immediately, humbly and most gladly return it, when time for payment came and with it the stray bill presented, a storm of reprimands was poured upon the payor's head. The sentiment seems to be this: instead of the government being considered the servant of the people, just the reverse is the case. Woe be to him who does not assist the tax-gatherer or any other servant of the law.

The police, whose sight is already as magnified as that of a Brazilian beetle, still are assisted by the people as volunteer detectives. Two tax officials come to the foreigner's house, devoid of all Japanese etiquette, without knocking or invitation, open the front door, crowd into the house and abruptly ask the owner concerning his income. Though impoliteness *might* not have been intended, they conclusively prove that in Japan a man's house is *not* his castle. But the policeman himself does not always understand the rules. At one of the popular watering places much frequented by foreigners, notices are posted, "Bathing without being fully

clothed (i.e., body all covered) forbidden." A police officer read the notice and so obediently went for a cooling bath in his starched white uniform, but on stepping out of the water, removed his dripping clothing and leisurely dried himself! Had he not complied with the rule?

But now as to the general preparations preceding the New Year, which lasts from three to five days: the people make a sort of bread dough called *mochi*, from a particular kind of rice, which is steamed to a soft substance and then pounded for hours in a wooden mortar or on a block with long-handled pestles. Five or six men are sometimes seen exerting their muscular powers around a single mortar. Even three or four days before, our neighbour's vehement pounding causes miniature earthquakes, which reach our dwelling late into the night. At last it is before us in loaves or flattened balls, white and soft, but really sticky and tasteless, tough and indigestible. And when the fact reaches our ears that a number of friends are occasionally indisposed on account of such repasts, it occasions us not the least surprise. *Mochi*, when cut in small pieces, is either toasted on the fire or cooked in a sort of sweetened soup.

Another preparation for New Year is the paying

of all debts, and in the towns particularly, the last few nights of the year people take especial precaution to secure the doors for fear of the burglar, who may not be a professional but just a distracted poor man seeking the wherewithal to pay his debts.

Rising at daybreak on New Year, all step out of doors, and facing the four points of the compass in succession, briskly clap their hands three times and then, with the palms held closely together, reverently bow their heads in formal worship. After a hasty breakfast, school children and students meet at the schools, where large and small, with their teachers, all dressed in their best, meet in the spacious auditorium. The national anthem is sung, and the pictures of their gracious Emperor and Empress are reverently worshipped. The town and court officials also meet at their respective offices, and over cups of *sake* formally extend their New Year greetings.

The duty of making New Year calls usually devolves upon the men and boys. The "callers" strangely deviate from the ordinary mode of punctilious Japanese etiquette. They either walk or ride in jinrikishas to the dwellings to be called upon, and hastening into the entrance through the open lattice doors, throw their visiting cards into a re-



FIREMEN'S ANTICS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY

ceptacle, and rush out again, seldom greeting the inmates. On account of so many friends to be visited, everybody seems of necessity to be in vehement haste, which in a way denudes this beautiful custom of much of its sanctity and sincerity. In the use of calling cards, the Japanese have by far outdone the West. Common artisans and little shopkeepers even, use them throughout the year, but the New Year caller, be he coolie or servant, schoolboy or student, all have their cards. Business men in the larger towns are often seen with a servant carrying a whole box full, following in their wake.

Then there are the New Year postcards, which have an enormous circulation all over the Empire. The years here being designated by their ancient signs of the Zodiac, these cards bear elaborate designs in keeping with this special year symbol. Thus the 1910 cards had engravings of the dog in a remarkable variety. The next sign is the wild boar, then the rat, the cow, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey and chicken. Decorations of this season are distinctive and unique. The national flag is hoisted near every doorway and twigs of pine are tied to either post, or sections of thick olive-green bamboo, with a branch of a plum

tree, are stuck into a cone-shaped little sand pile on both sides of the rustic gate; either a skilfully wrought, horn-shaped twist of rice straw, or a fringe of straw with ferns and queer-shaped pieces of white paper tied to it, is stretched across the gateway.

Be the New Year celebrated in the more balmy sections of the country or amid the snow and ice near Tokyo and farther north, the people are always found in exuberant, joyful, and if at no other time, at least now, in conciliatory spirits. All dress in their best, and when the Japanese gentleman appears in his immaculate native costume, it is as greatly to his credit as the often ill-fitting foreign suit is the very opposite. Frequently when not in foreign costume, he insists on donning a pair of shoes or a felt or "stovepipe" hat, often a few sizes too large, thus transforming his graceful habit into a ridiculous one.

Our friends and acquaintances, both young and old, bring New Year greetings to our home, and the missionary returns the same. The customary salutation, "*Shin nen wa omedeto gosarimasu*," bursts everywhere, in joyful notes, upon our ears, and which translated literally, amounts to this: "As to the New Year, august felicitation is"; and sub-

ordinate to this one may be heard such as, "Honourably condescend to be good to me another year."

At the entrance to the houses of the better classes may be seen exquisite bits of decoration; perhaps the entire front room is thrown open, where, upon the matted floors, stand stuffed cranes, also dwarfed pines and other evergreens in clay vases, on old-fashioned lacquered stands. The background may be a big folding screen of many sections, the panels sprinkled with gold, and amid other scenery a large covey of storks in the forefront. Another entrance, which all the rest of the year may be closed, is now swung wide open, revealing an unvarnished hardwood staircase and floor, planed to a polish, leading to the æsthetically decorated guest chamber, upon whose immaculately clean white mats stands a large panelled crimson screen, splashed with gold, on which in rich colours a gnarly, coarse-barked Japanese umbrella pine is sketched in bold relief. In front of the screen stands a plain but expensively lacquered tray—the receptacle for the cards of the New Year well-wishers. While performing our share of calls, among which the Christian believers had the first claim, we should have found it much more difficult, amid the labyrinth of small houses in narrow streets and passages, to locate some of

the poorer friends, had it not been that they, amid other little bits of decoration in the entrance, had placed the open Bible in a conspicuous place as the receptacle for the cards.

So much for the first day. The second is usually made a time of *sake* drinking and general merry-making. Even those who would not dare to indulge in a spree at any other time, feel as though the New Year would not be befittingly ushered in without a drinking bout. Where intoxication in the West often leads otherwise thoughtful mortals to give vent to pugnaciousness and vociferous and vitriolic excesses of language, *sake* seldom renders these little brown carousers vicious, but simply hilarious and silly, and with rubicund, beaming faces they may stagger about, even pledging friendship to total strangers. We were but a few days in Japan when one of these bibulous fellows met us on the street car. He suspected our calling, and appeared greatly ashamed of his condition. In spite of frequent declinations, he forced upon us various tokens of friendliness. First it was an orange, then a second and a third, then came an egg, followed by a few more in succession—all raw!

But drinking *sake* and smoking diminutive pipes is only part of the festivities. Men from all walks

of life, with their wives and children and friends, make a bee-line for the shrines. Prominent and haughty officials, whom one would suspect of being almost anything except religiously inclined, meekly bow before wood and stone. A modern brass band may be seen serenading before some ancestral shrine. The *komuso*, an old-time begging minstrel with a basket-shaped straw mask over his head, and in white gloves rendering a few bars on a bamboo lute in front of each decorated gate, may be succeeded by a group of professional story-tellers. Processions throng the streets; fire-brigades in picturesque holiday dress perform antics on tall, bamboo ladders, and boys with kites and girls playing at shuttlecock, complete this Eastern scene.

V

CURIOUS STREET SCENES

WHEN we first landed in Japan, and standing in the narrow streets, looked into the faces of a lot of little people, we were enchanted and amazed. Though now no longer a newcomer, the novelty of these quaint Oriental streets still affords not a little diversion. The little shops and booths, places which, though so small, contain a thousand and one things, are unfailing in their charm. Here, with great deftness the green-grocer and fruit-seller have arranged their wares, resembling from a distance a huge bouquet. There, the flower shop blazes in brilliance, and the lantern maker squats at his multicoloured task. The carpenter, the tinner—all in cramped quarters and usually in sitting posture—are shaving and clipping away. At the next entrance we perhaps see a man severing chicken meat from the bone, performing the operation as skilfully as the surgeon with his dissecting knife. Beef and other meats are commonly sold in this fashion. The smithy,

also, where old irons, burrs and bars are stuck up on the walls and where the little puny man sitting on the dirt floor works the bellows with his toes, with powdered charcoal creating a little fire as though he meant to warm a teapot, and leisurely heating an iron, with his little hammer pecking on an excuse of an anvil, he produces a faint, exhausted clink. Alas for that cheerful forge, with its showers of flashing sparks, the joy of our childhood days!

Two or three paces farther on one is confronted with a typical Japanese shoe store. All the footwear of the little brown man is here on view. The *geta*—wooden clogs—and straw sandals are indeed a fanciful exhibition. They line the benches, the floors, the shelves. They hang from above, and seemingly are everywhere, allowing the seller just about room enough to coil up on his cushion. The newcomer is at once startled at the immense quantity of this simple footwear and the many places where it is sold; but he soon finds a solution to his query when he hears that a Japanese man annually makes away with from eight to ten pairs. Upon first arriving, we would now and then hear a man trot along on his *geta*, and invariably thought it was a high-stepper horse pacing down the street.

It is neither soothing to the nerves, nor does it seem decorous in a Westerner's eyes, to notice a bevy of richly dressed ladies, while walking pigeontoed to a fearful degree, noisily and with utter unconcern, rattle and drag their *geta* over a hard pavement. And what thunder a hurrying throng can produce when crossing a wooden bridge!

Yonder is a shrewd-looking vegetable pedlar whose deep-furrowed face is as coarse in grain as the bark of an oak. At night, in ancient grotesque garb, and assisted by a *samisen* player, he gives little theatrical performances at a newly opened booth; in daytime, however, he carries loads heavy enough for a horse, and with quick step walks from street to street, still having sufficient energy to call out his wares as he goes. One marvels at those wonderful, big, snow-white radishes he sells; also his green onions, carrots, fruits, and even lotus roots, dug from the muddy bottoms of ponds. Fancy yourself eating long burdock roots which grow in any country back yard! The Japanese consider these a toothsome article, and the pedlar fetches them from the farmer, who raises them like turnips. Another vendor vehemently shouts, "Bamboo children!" Of course he means young, crisp bamboo sprouts, which are sold in sizes from six inches to

a foot long, and frequently thicker than an ear of corn.

In the booth on the corner of yon cross-road, as soon as frost is nipping the noses, two or three little men are busily engaged baking and selling delicious sweet potatoes in slices or whole. Though there are many such stores all over town, this one alone markets nearly 300 pounds every day of the season. Immense crowds of ruddy, and mostly bare-headed school children and youths, passing, create the briskest of trades. Be it on a cold rainy day, when each comes on high, stilted *geta*, with that novel and picturesque paper umbrella; or again when biting winds from the sea whip around the low-roofed houses and through narrow passages—tingling fingers and bare, chubby ankles—if these lads and lassies possess but a quarter of a cent, it is quite sure to be expended here. And never was there a wiser outlay of pennies; for when that stooping little man lifts a wooden lid and out of the flat iron pan placed over a heap of glowing charcoals spears those toothsome tubers with a metal chopstick and places them in eager, little brown hands, they serve a double purpose—diffusing a pleasant warmth through chilly fingers and then filling the gastronomical cavity.

Orientalism is graphically depicted around a big, flat-stone-curbed well, the meeting place of the neighbourhood women, who come with their babies on their backs, to get water, wash their rice, their clothes and any other thing; but, as it seems, especially to gossip. Then add a miscellaneous troop of scantily dressed youngsters, careless of the wabbling heads of the babies strapped on *their* backs and rending the air with vociferous shouts while at play under a burning meridian sun, and you have a most tempting bit of realistic scenery for the kodak. The streets themselves—sometimes they are gravelled, but being narrow there is no room for shade trees nor sidewalks; rainy weather necessitates ploughing through deep, black slime. Houses and shops are unpainted and generally dingy-looking. Here and there the front of long structures, perhaps even a rich man's home, looks unusually shabby and squalid. Store and house entrances are level with the low, muddy street, and everywhere the air is defiled by filthy cesspools and ditches.

“Fire! Fire!!” So everybody shouts, and noiseless sandals as well as clattering *geta* all make a bee-line in that direction. An antiquated hand pump is dragged along by the “brigade,” whose

banners, consisting of big lanterns, strung up on bamboo poles, solemnly proceed, though the clang of a bronze bell suspended between tall double timbers, and operated by a little old man with a wooden mallet, urges them to speed. Our next-door neighbour woman returns from this exciting scene and proceeds to describe the event in detail. Her partner evidently listens with mute astonishment, and after genuine Japanese fashion simply punctuates each sentence with "hm!" and at times, to reveal her intense interest, utters "hm, HM!" with greater vehemence. While this is ostensibly done as a matter of politeness, it frequently also reveals an undesirable trait—that of secretively absorbing outside information but imparting none.

We must not overlook the modern brass band. Their predecessors are yet known, marching tandem through the streets, beating various-shaped metals and a drum or two. The whole outfit reminds one of youngsters beating tin pans. This modern brass band, however, has somewhat improved things and seems to be a better drawing card. Such a band usually consists of three or four instruments, a bass and a snare drum, a bass horn and sometimes a cornet. The music is various and often at variance. Of course they cannot be very "choicy,"

since their selections are usually confined to "Marching through Georgia" and the like, with a few Japanese ditties, and as some one has said, "They play them with a fine disregard of appropriateness, as wedding marches as well as funeral consolations."

We just caught three or four men practising on a band-stand in the near-by park. Two of these incorrigible mimics of Western ways were quite adept with the drums, but they needed just one more instrument, and the cheapest they had found was a little baby accordion. They were evidently taking great pains to initiate a third man into the art of playing upon it. We watched—and understood. The simple instructions were to draw it back and forth in accompaniment with their drums! We did not linger—the efforts of this new performer being a little too original for us.

Speaking of this park (it being on the beach), it is, during the summer especially, the rendezvous of all strata of society. Though here not a sprig of grass may grow, young and old find in the shade of these tall pines ample room for rest and play. The beach also affording splendid opportunities for sea-bathing, students of both sexes, accompanied by their respective teachers, all properly clad, here

have their swimming drills. But another class, both men and women, who maintain the ancient and more common view of propriety, are also well represented here. Though living but a half block from the sea, on account of above conditions, the writer has found it exceedingly difficult to take his children out for an enviable sea bath. A woman leisurely moving out of the water, slipping on her *geta*, and raising a fine silk parasol, clad only in these indispensable articles, proceeding to a bench in the park, where she dons the rest of her apparel, is only a sample of what commonly occurs in many places.

But however amazing the foreigner may find these unique sights, *he* also seems to be a never-ending curiosity. At times when stopping at a shop, crowds of young and old, some standing at a distance, others getting within a few feet, will glare into one's face and features with as much complacency as though they were reading a billposter. But it must be remembered that this incivility is generally unintentional. Just for a little amusement, however, we have at times returned the gaze, glowering at our hypnotized inspectors with all intensity, till they, becoming suddenly conscious of the fact that they were an equal curiosity to us,

completely collapsed, and with eyes dropped to the ground beat a hasty retreat.

Nature is now shrouded in darkness and the sandman has already closed many thousand pairs of dusky little eyes. But through the murky gloom and sea fog even, one is sure to obtain some fascinating peeps at the quaint little dwellers and their clustering huts of thatch and tile. Returning from a stereopticon exhibition of the Life of Christ, given in an open space amid hundreds of fishermen compounds, our way led through many zigzag passages and on across an erstwhile cemetery of the near-by temple. But the priests, in dire financial straits, had had thousands of slabs and tombstones removed to a crowded corner and nearly the entire area of this "God's Acre" sold. Packs of wolfish-looking dogs with glaring eyes and bristling necks, making their nocturnal prowls, scented the foreigner's tracks. Within close range, where we stood, they gathered in a howling conference and snapped at and bit each other and profaned this "temple of silence."

Here and there we hear a ramming and a slamming; which means that although it is a sultry summer night, Nippon's old custom wills that the slavish little wife or chubby servant girl closely seal

up the house with those big rain-doors. Reaching home, we hear from the neighbour's barn the terrific shouts of grown-up and smaller boys practising "ju-jitsu." We retire, but nature is not yet all at rest. Natives pass noisily by on their *geta*; soon some rattling jinrikisha, creating a noise unlike anything else in the world, are bowling up to the near-by hotel. And now what a thunder! The little postman with tiny little lantern and sandalled feet, in genuine "post haste" has come, pounding the rain-doors. We reluctantly rise; but cheered by the hope of good news from home, we descend to receive only an advertisement.

In the small hours of the night, some blocks away, we hear the loud and hideous yells of an insane woman, who, like many such unfortunates in this country, is not confined. She passes our house, uttering blood-curdling and infernal threats. More soothing is the croaking of the frogs in the near-by rice field, as is the soft sighing of the wind through the grand old pines and the gentle "swish-swash" of the waves against the sandy beach. Later on we are reminded that it is not yet morning, as the night watchman passes on his rounds, striking with his club against the fences and the doors of the houses. In other places these guardians

sometimes keep step to the music of two flat pieces of hard wood, which they clap together, or else carry a hollow steel rod and piston, which they strike every step or two upon the pavement, making a noise which must be heard to be appreciated. Just about daybreak, a company of women in quick march and ringing bells ascend the near-by hill on a pilgrimage. In the adjoining yards we hear the clapping of hands, and we know that, standing in the open air, our neighbours, facing the rising sun (which selfsame orb our friends at home saw sink behind the western hills some nine short hours before) are zealously offering their morning prayers.

VI

PILGRIMS AND PILGRIMAGES

“**S**TRANGERS and pilgrims on the earth—seek a country”—this has a Biblical chime; “weary wanderer,” “pilgrim’s staff,” “low-crowned hat,” “cowl and cape”—these also sound poetical. But in Japan, that pilgrimages, one of the cardinal features of its ancient worship, still play such a mighty rôle, discloses the melancholy fact that there remain millions of mortals who have not yet been rescued from the slimy, black ooze of diabolical superstition. Some of these pilgrimages are made throughout the entire year, while others only at certain seasons or anniversaries. At such special occasions various parts of Japan are literally swarming. The outfit of these plebeian devotees is generally as follows: a blank book, consisting of a number of sheets tied together for the purpose of obtaining the impress of the seal of each temple visited, a little brass bell, a straw mat, a miniature pair of sandals made of straw or paper, a satchel or a box for the tickets and a small pot of

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paste with which to affix the same to the holy places.

In appearance the pilgrim is anything but imposing. A Japanese professor in a eulogy of his race declared that their physical ugliness in reality constitutes one of the chief elements of strength which the nation possesses. Now whether the general run of this people are really ugly, we leave for them to state; but admitting that there is little beauty found among the rank and file, these straggling wanderers, isolated or in bands, often present in their pilgrim garb a pitiful and unsightly appearance. They are usually a bowed-down, hollow-cheeked and sickly crew, and their tight muslin pantaloons, clinging to their short legs, conspicuously reveal the fact that a goodly number of them could not successfully drive a drove of pigs.

Not a small proportion of the regular pilgrims belong to the army of 100,000 lepers said to be in this country. With swollen, aching limbs and unsightly blotches here and there, or lumpy growths on neck or side of face, they drag themselves from village to village and from shrine to shrine. Every day we must handle the filthy copper coins, so many of which pass through their fingers; on all kinds of public conveyances we may touch the appurtenances which their blighting hands have contaminated.



PILGRIM PRIESTS WITH IMAGE OF BUDDHA

Then, are we ever immune from this plague when eating or sleeping in Japanese hotels?

The pilgrims' headgear consists of a straw-coloured, broad-brimmed, basket-shaped hat woven of reeds. They either carry a long, plain staff or one with metallic rings from the temple fastened to the top. Pilgrimages in Japan are not so much a gloomy rite as those of the Burman or Hindoo. Their love for nature and travel, and their modern restlessness afford them, when going in bands together, exercise conducive to health, and a knowledge regarding things, places and people which they would likely not otherwise obtain. It must not be forgotten, however, that the idea of penance is by no means lacking. Wearisome are the bulky burdens saddled on their backs and enervating and heart-sickening some of their lonely distant journeys. Again, a large class can be found revolving around temple courts, or reciprocating between temple gate and shrine a hundred or even a thousand times, dropping a bamboo tally at each round, and offering their prayers in a loud, despairing wail.

In feudal times, among the common people, "pilgrims alone were free to travel beyond the boundaries of their province. Consequently many went out in pilgrim's dress, largely with the object

of seeing the world, or in search of missing fathers, murderers or thieves." Indeed, theirs was also a religious purpose, but for the above-named designs especially, the cloak of religion was found useful. To-day even, the object may be the restoration of some sick child, etc. During the late war many became pilgrims in the hope of securing the soldiers' safe return. Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines are alike resorted to, as since the Meiji Era any distinction between them has been quite lost. And really they sing the Buddhist chant while climbing to the eyrie of a mountain god, and often supplication is offered at a shrine to quite a wrong deity.

One would imagine these religious "tramps," hungry for the Bread of Life, but poor mortals! Suckled by superstition, their pagan creed is like the lightning rod, warding off the thunderbolts of God's Spirit. A wandering priest with his boy acolyte passed our house every winter night during nearly two months previous to the Chinese New Year, and while walking, in a loud, plaintive monotone they mumbled a "vain repetition," and stopping at the doors of sympathizers, rang their tiny bells. Another instance we recall is that of a veritable ecclesiastic with tall mitre and stilted clogs, who during a similar period nightly stalked the high-

ways, blowing a mammoth conch shell. But on the longed-for New Year Day, these zealots did not forget to reap their harvests from the hands of those whose domiciles they had purged of their malicious demons.

The pilgrims on Awaji visit *hachi-ju-kakka-sho*—(eighty-eight sacred places), but these are mere reproductions of the eighty-eight sacred spots of Shikoku, a neighbouring island. Indeed there are reproductions of reproductions. On the precincts of a single hill may be found those sacred sites marked by little shrines, thus enabling the pilgrim to complete his task in a few hours, where originally it would entail the waste of an entire month. Many of these pilgrims have shown relentless zeal all through their lives. One, for instance, had completed the entire pilgrimage of 88 temples 650 times, which figures 57,200 different temple visits, and a walking distance of over 23,000 miles.

Moreover, on certain special occasions great multitudes of school children, led by their teachers, companies and almost regiments of soldiers, with their officers, governmental dignitaries, University graduates and the rich in their silken robes, by train or steamboat proceed to some famous Mecca like Ise or Kotohira or the Kyoto temples. But the pro-

fessionals also, in their distinctive pilgrim garb and with heavy-beaded rosaries strung about their necks, flock to these favourite goals; crawling up steep mountain heights, great droves may be found near springs or lakelets where they sometimes bivouac. Ere reaching the sacred pinnacles, they invariably stop to change their straw sandals and wash their hands, that they may not trespass on the god's domain in an impure state. .

Spring may be arrayed in its garlands of cherry blossoms; the mountains be covered with the glorious rhododendron; wistaria, lagerstrœmia (*sarusuberi*) and peonies adorn the temple courts, and the pilgrim, ascending a long avenue of ivy-clad pine or cryptomeria lined with artistic stone lanterns, could from the height attained, like Moses of old, in rapture view the glorious scenery of mountain, sea and sky; but here many have been accustomed to retire to a certain enclosure and fast for an entire week, no other refreshment being allowed them but the use of a cooling bath. Many climb the steeps of Fuji-yama, and betaking themselves before dawn to a particular elevation on the sacred mount, await the glorious sunrise. When the ruby orb looms up out of the broad, blue Pacific they greet it devoutly with muttered prayers and rubbing of

rosaries. Some make a circuit of thirty-three temples of the goddess *Kwannon*, scattered over various parts of the country and arriving at the last, they accordingly deposit their erstwhile snowy pilgrim shirt.

Ordinarily these *junrei* are composed of elderly people; but at certain seasons of the year, in the rural districts, bands of bright and vigorous young men—a little more modernly dressed—as well as modest-looking young maidens, whose varicoloured garb is also a deviation from the old custom, under the leadership of a priest walking with solemn stride and distinguished by his immense, black-painted straw hat the size of a half-bushel, can be found ardently and joyfully ringing their bells and chanting *en masse* in front of a dilapidated shrine. Be their devotion deep-seated or only spasmodic, their appearance as pilgrims peculiarly appeals to the Christian's sympathy. "There is rest for the weary."

VII

MUSICAL ECCENTRICITIES

WHEN only a day in Japan, and after having passed through a typical crowded Oriental street, we, amid other points, at least guessed one correctly. Returning to the hotel, we stated to our friend our great disappointment that the Japanese were not a musical people. Another shall describe a vocal effort made by an aspiring youth: "It was one of those wailing ballads, half soprano, half falsetto, and certain passages of it, had they been intended for a music-hall imitation of a tom-cat on the tiles, would have been a marvellously clever performance. I was assured, however, that the singer's voice was an unusually good one." Fishermen, coolies, merchants and students even, passing our house late into the night, singing all sorts of ditties, corroborate the above description. To a foreigner's ears these renderings are a most agonizing performance; the strains consist mainly of prolonged grunts and vibrating



PERFORMING ON *Gekkin* AND *Samisen*

“No’s,” to which but a few gulps of *sake* add not a little tinge of heathenishness.

But that these “tunes” are beyond the pianist’s skill is accounted for by the fact that Japanese classical music is anything but a science. It is more a combination of squeals and coos, and, rather than soothing, it exasperates a Westerner’s feelings. It neither exhibits the majesty of the major, nor the plaintive softness of the minor strains. Present to an ordinary crowd a piece of Western music, rendered in its various parts, and it is like one of their own proverbs, “As giving guineas to a cat.” Indeed the music taught in the schools to-day is set somewhat after Western fashion, but it does not supply the want of the people. It is seldom tried at home as a social factor. In the West people find their enjoyment in religious or popular music written by men of culture and experience; but composers of popular music in Japan, as a rule, “belong to the ignorant and uneducated class; it savors of vulgarity and is popularized only by the *geisha*.” Of course none will deny that there are screeches in Occidental music. Once we opened the way for a high school principal to frankly give his opinion of our music by first kindly criticising theirs; and

he retorted that foreign music was too noisy and devoid of variation.

Here are sung translations from Chinese classics—in later years also some from English authors. A miscellaneous collection of tiny odes, called *uta*—mostly composed of seventeen or thirty-one syllables—are sung with little variation of tone. Sometimes these vocalists appear to be imitating a ventriloquist, or again drag along in monotone with admirable bass voices. Then there is also what is known as *utai*, a sort of lyric poetry. But from days of yore these little friendly people, in their longing to give vent to simple strains of mirth, could all draw on their peculiarly fitting supply of classified ballads. Here were farmer songs, coolie songs, songs for children, for nurses, for dances, congratulations, festivals and temples; included also were the man with his mountain pack-horse, the woodchopper and sailor. It is rather amusing sometimes to hear a native evangelist sing a solo in what we would term a “helter-skelter” fashion, without irritating one single ear or even provoking a smile in his appreciative audience, squatted on the matted floor. When first arriving among this novel people, their music, like many other strange things, we could only describe in superlatives. We have known

a young preacher to start a hymn, but widely missing the mark, nevertheless wade manfully and alone through the first verse, and then, to our astonishment, draw a long breath and start in on the next one, and so on through the whole song, composing his music (?) as he went along! What they lack in ability they certainly make up in self-confidence and perseverance. But because of the younger generation, who at school have learned better, at least mechanically, and also as a result of the training given to the many thousands of Sunday school youths, singing of the good old Christian hymns at the missions, and especially so in the older established churches, has attained a remarkably praiseworthy type.

Most of the musical instruments, lutes, flutes, drums and fiddles, were imported from China. Besides, there are two others, on one of which, at least, most daughters of fairly well-to-do families in this country learn to play—the *samisen* and the *koto*. The *samisen*—a kind of banjo—is said to have hailed from Manila. It has a square-shaped body, covered with catskin, with head and neck made of rosewood. It is played with a triangular piece of wood or ivory, and the musician, who usually takes a kneeling position on a mat, unless walking from

door to door, may produce an astonishing variety of tones, often extremely weird and plaintive. The *koto* is far more elaborate, often costing a hundred dollars or more. It is a low box about seven feet long and one foot wide, constructed of a hard wood called *kiri*. "It has thirteen strings, each with a bridge; it is tuned by shifting the bridges, and played by means of small pieces of ivory attached to the first three fingers of the hands of the player, who kneels on the floor before it." The notes of this instrument have a pleasing effect and somewhat resemble the harp.

We were once invited to a musicale at a Girls' Normal School. We went and received most gratifying impressions. The young ladies in crowds met the guests at a rustic, arched entrance, and with peculiar, Japanese grace welcomed them. Having entered the principal's room, the gentleman told us over a cup of tea that the American-style cake on the table before us was made by the students. Being yet a little early, we were escorted to one of the halls in the great building, where drawings, fancy needlework and artificial flowers, the work of the students, were exhibited. The time for the exercises having arrived, we were led to the auditorium and offered a front seat, where we were

confronted by the most prominent gentlemen of the town, some dressed in foreign style and others in Japanese. The bell tapped and the principal made a few preliminary remarks, after which the audience rose and sang the national anthem. Being a long-metred tune, and sung at a low pitch, the audience, with the students, rendered the whole with such tenderness and swaying power that even a patriotic American felt the effects of it. And why not? It was their best expression of homage to their worshipful Emperor.

Immediately after this, the principal walked to the front of the rostrum, where upon the desk was a little stand, made of exquisitely planed but unpainted wood, and bearing a little box. He made a low bow, then ascended, removed from the box a blue cloth wrapping, and raising the lid with one hand, as carefully as though it were dynamite, with the other lifted out the contents, and like the Catholic priest raising the crucifix, he reverently held it to his head, bowing to the same. "What is this wonderful object?" we asked ourselves. Our neighbour volunteered the information. "This is the Emperor's Rescript on Education," he said. The principal opened a roll, and in a monotone distinctly read this worthy document. Closing, he re-

placed the covering and made another bow, after which one of the teachers carried the little shrine out of the room.

The program of the evening consisted of twenty-eight numbers—some splendid renderings of song and music by the students composing the greater part. They showed efficiency on instruments such as the organ, piano and violin; but with nothing were we so well pleased as to hear these students, in companies of fifteen or twenty, sing alternately various selections in soprano, alto and bass. After the whole was ended, and the audience dispersed through the corridors, the students again made themselves conspicuous by their extreme courtesy. Down the long, brick-paved pathway, they stood at intervals with cheerful, beaming paper lanterns, and as the guests departed, all in their turn made a silent bow.

VIII

FISHES AND FISHERMEN

ONE morning when the noise of the rolling waves thundered through the old pines near our dwelling, our neighbour fisherman, with keen, experienced eye glancing over the water's surface, discovered a great school of sardines. He raised a shout which was taken up by others farther on and on and which rose louder and louder till all the fisher folk of the neighbourhood hastily gathered on the beach, preparing the boats with their cargo of immense long seines, measuring over two hundred feet in length. As one gang tossed out upon the deep, encircling the fishes, the yell in the settlement still continued till the last woman and child responded to the muster.

One tottering old man, who understood his business, engineered these stalwart men and buoyant youths with grace and ease. A word or two—and the whole squad moved as one man; not because they were hired but on account of respecting age. With long strong ropes, two gangs on the shore

drew in the ends of the net. How they tugged and grunted! The draught was a very unusual one and sometimes when the massive waves would lift the big net, bulging with fishes, the crowd became hilarious. Well knowing that they could not drag such a cargo up the sand beach, young striplings as well as venerable old sea veterans plunged into the water and with great difficulty moved the net slowly forward. The net broke; and these fishermen, much of the time under water, held up the torn meshes above the surface, while others, with huge bamboo baskets, hastily lugged the booty up to the shore and dumped it into empty boats. But oh, the millions of sardines that escaped! The waves along the beach were alive with them. Delightful must have been the feast of the boys and girls dwelling in every home in that vicinity who swooped down upon the beach with pots and all sorts of vessels to pick up the sardines washed up in heaps on the sand. Boat after boat was filled, and yet it seemed so long till the nets were emptied; feeble old men continued working in the cold deep till they were blue and trembling and utterly exhausted.

This was a red-letter day—and a big, bright-red flag in the shape of a fish was hoisted on the beach. With these hunters of the sea, unusual success is



DRAWING IN THE NET

generally followed by feasting and drinking *sake*. Out to sea they went in a big boat, rowed by some ten men. Red banners floated in the air, and the crowd, almost more than the craft could carry, lazily tossed about on the water, shouting and singing their unmelodious ditties. But at night this scene was far more splendid when the masts and the rigging of the boat were strung with glowing red paper lanterns, appearing to the stranger like a fiery moving phantom upon the dark waves of the deep.

Take the fisherman where you will, he is always a most interesting character. Grand the familiar scene when, on some autumnal evening, down through the bushy limbs of long-leaved pine trees, from a moonless sky stars gleam in regal splendour, and through the murky twilight the eye sweeping over the bay near our home, from headland to headland and beyond, gazes upon a thousand starry twinkling lights which mark a thousand fisher sampans bobbing on the rippling waters.

But these little men also hunt their prey in daytime. They go out in small gangs and in different directions; or again, here and there fleets of two or three hundred of these three-cornered boats with their double-acting paddles can be seen plying on

an area of but twenty acres. These from a distance on a placid sea have the appearance of a great herd of cattle on the Western plains. Again the scene changes when with the lowering sky and at signs of an oncoming storm, far out in the deep, hoisting their little square sails, they make a bee-line for the distant shore, from whence they appear like so many corn shocks in a wide, wide field on a foggy November day.

Aside from the ordinary sampan, now and then a larger one, though of similar pattern and oars, is put into use. When landing, these, like the smaller ones, are drawn up the sloping sand beach where thundering breakers can do no harm and where the unpainted hull can be frequently scoured clean. The reader would greatly enjoy seeing one of these bigger smacks landed; every man, woman and child of the fishing haram must come to the rescue—and whether pulling much or little, all must somewhere hitch to the big straw ropes, hundreds of feet in length. It is an exciting scene—beats a barbecue or an Irish wake by far. At the signal from a little man all give a terrific roar, and pulling for a moment, abruptly stop to rest. One may imagine how much breath and time is wasted. Now and then a rope breaks and—a long swath of these promiscuous

toilers is mowed down at one stroke, and again vociferous shouts rend the air.

Now a peep at these seafarers on *terra firma*. When storms forbid them to launch out, they stroll the streets in droves, swinging leisurely along like prelates and from little pipes "drinking" tobacco, as they quaintly put it; and in blue checkered *Jimeno*, with a big fish or a crane or the rising sun gaudily stamped in red on the back, they are surely a theatrical curiosity. But he can also busy himself at home. With the assistance of his tribal members, both large and small, he generally makes his own nets and lines, and all his rope—mainly of pounded rice straw. Living right on the spot with him is the wainwright and oar-maker, who represents an immense army. His patterns are few and simple—often reduced to a single, uniform and time-honoured one. It is always the same three-cornered craft; the tip of the stem end appears to have been sawed off. The prow forms a gradual long curve from the body of the boat and is very high.

But though these dark-skinned adventurers have intervals of leisure, theirs is a life of great exposure. In the summer, in their scanty clothing (so often none at all) which betokens enviable comfort, they suffer little. But in the winter, with

padded kimono drenched to the skin, or else squatting in their sampans on high seas, with benumbed fingers operating a number of lines, fighting storms and adverse winds—all these create havoc upon their health. How ghostly these appear to the traveller on the coasting steamer ploughing through the seething waters!

Hark! What are these weird sounds falling in quick tempo upon the small hours of the morning? “*Hi-ya, he, he, hi-ya!*” Whole fleets of little boats, each manned by two or three fishers, come out of the rivers and inlets of the ocean, for but a moment, as it were, stealing over placid waters, only too soon to ride the whitecaps, bump against some frowning cliff or scrape a treacherous rock. But their minds are bent upon a harvest from the briny waters, and they ardently sing their *funa-uta* (sailor song), the object of which, of course, is to put energy into their work and keep time with their rowing. Ere the clang of a single temple bell could be heard, we have been roused morning after morning by these quaint and primitive strains of music, nearly a mile away. But already these men have performed the invariable duty, which amounts to almost a sacred ceremony, that of bidding farewell to wife and children, being not in the least assured of a safe return.

Bays and coast waters are well stocked with fish and creeping things beyond number or knowledge, reminding one of Peter's vision. With the use of a glass-bottomed square box, the haunts of Mr. Octopus can be seen at a great depth, and with a three-pronged instrument fastened to a long bamboo these long-armed, slimy sea-devils are speared in great quantities. But for eating they are as tough as *mochi* and as indigestible as *daikon*. There are also countless numbers of cuttlefish and eels, as boneless and slippery as a pedlar, armour-plated crabs and lobsters; also tons of starfish are hauled on the sand beach to dry for fertilizer. Of sea urchins and starfishes alone there are thirty-eight species; and the number of species of fish inhabiting or invading Japanese waters is said to exceed six hundred. Leaning over the gunwale of the steamer, immense droves of sea birds can be seen in the clear depths below.

Aside from their swimming feats, some of these intrepid brown men are marvellous divers. With basket in one hand, they plunge into the deep, and amid reefs and rocks, with a hammer pound off oysters and gigantic clams. We have also seen the women, for the sake of a daily livelihood, dive into the briny waters as readily as the men—snatching

an edible seaweed from the rocky caverns and poking it into a bag fastened to the neck. But our fisher friends also make for the great deep, where they waylay those whale-shaped, two- or three-hundred-pound dolphins and other big marine game, with which, amid laughter and frolicking, they return in the evening. With great haste they bring their catch in two-wheeled carts to the depot, whence many tons are daily shipped to the large cities. Afraid of missing the train, they come panting pell-mell down the zigzag streets, a long procession of half-clad men and pudgy women, some pulling, others pushing and all shouting at the top of their voices, "*Ho-o, ho-o, hoyo; ho-o, hoyo!*"

In some places trained cormorants are employed in fishing. This is always done by torchlight. These birds are caught when very young and utilized for fifteen or twenty years; one of them can catch as many as one hundred and fifty good-sized fish in a single hour. Whales are of course caught in other countries, but in Japan whaling furnishes the wildest of scenes. They are still caught by means of nets and harpoons, as well as with modern whaling boats. During the season we have seen four or five big monsters, from sixty to eighty feet in length, towed daily to a coast station

where many men and more women employed in landing and cutting up the carcasses presented a horrid and most repulsive spectacle, and where the seashore was transformed into a mammoth slaughter-house.

As may be expected of the poorest of any clime, the fishermen's dwellings, often a continuation of huts under one straw or tile roof, are crudely built of mud and sticks, resembling a beaver camp. Equally so, the entire town, as a rule, is an antiquated ramshackle affair. Almost everywhere vermin can be seen—crawling, hopping or flying about. Though means of ablution are theirs in abundance, they evidently are not deemed a great necessity. Unless confronted by the policeman's frown or a chilly winter wind, the men usually evince their utter inability to comprehend any reason for clothing. The children, more numerous than among any other class, run about in happy abandon, and when the tide is out, like crabs, turtles and octopus, play leap frog together. Being much of the time almost denuded of dress, sea bathing is the easiest thing in the world. Then wonder not at our frequent puzzling, “Why so many dirty faces?” And those indescribable noses! A mission worker with frail stomach may wisely distribute sheets of

coarse rice paper (instead of kerchiefs) ere he proceeds to initiate his young auditors into the mysteries of the Bible. Unsightly blotches of eczema are on many skulls; the nose and other parts of the face are disfigured with boils and blisters as though the dear children had been smelling a rather hot flat iron.

There being no chimney to the dwellings, the fireplace is a crude hearth, often but a trench, and the little hut becomes filled with stinging wood smoke, blackening and shining the rafters above with soot and damp, and escaping through door openings and dilapidated *shoji*; the whole looking from the grey, featureless passages like a rat trap indeed. But here they live—with seemingly some degree of contentment, in a small space, on old brown-smoked mats, where they sleep and eat and keep their nets and tackle, and where from carbon dioxide constantly drenching the hut within, as well as from the open sewage without, vile and poisonous odours are emitted.

Their daring recklessness makes these ocean hunters appear fatalistic. But, after all, none of them enjoy the thought of death. They are also very superstitious and afraid of ghosts. Lest some offence on their part should invoke the vengeance

of the sea god, they earnestly covet his benediction on their distant, trackless journeys. For many among their number are continually being buried in watery graves, howling winds having driven their frail sampans through nebulous fogs, upon the hidden, wrecking rocks.

Though boisterous and rude, these fisher folk are also clever and kind-hearted. We never saw one do the least injury to a child, and having often visited these villages, generally found the people cheerful listeners. Though sadly ignorant and well-nigh incapable of comprehending the simplest of divine truths, yet some are grandly transformed by the power of the Gospel.

IX

'MID FLOWERS AND FORESTS

JAPAN—flower land, sunrise land, land of gay lanterns and bright kimonos, land of cherry and lotus and iris—thus she dwells in the thoughts of most of the world. But this is only one side of the picture. But come with us and you can be shown six months of solid winter, with mercury thermometers frozen hard and straw-topped villages entirely buried in snow; long, long stretches of rigorous, unsettled frontier; wild, jungle-like forests; bleak, barren hills and rugged, unexplored mountains; here gay clothing and delicate manners are unknown and people often exist by strenuously fighting the wolf from the door. Forsake the city, turn from the beaten path, and you shall have a glimpse of real Japan.

Nevertheless Japan *is* beautiful, and the statement that it is “the garden spot of the Orient” we would not contest. The Japanese flora affords over two thousand seven hundred and forty species of trees and plants which also have an exceptionally

large number of genera. Of trees alone there are over one hundred and sixty-eight species, only half of which number can be found throughout entire Europe. One cause for this marvel is the great variety of climate. On the other hand, the sturdy pine of the distant north flourishes beside the tropical bamboo. Here is a wheat field reminding one of the Dakotas (except in size), and the adjoining luxurious rice patch would equally be a credit to the Gulf States.

Foreigners in Japan are struck with the comparative scarcity of songsters in the forests; but there is no end whatever to flowers, both wild and cultivated. On some festival days one may see the country people hauling their flowers to the towns and cities in loads, like the American farmer does his cordwood. Though the native flowers of Japan may not be as fragrant as those of the West, perhaps due to the humidity of the climate, the Japanese show a far heartier appreciation of them. Immense quantities are used at funerals. Singularly beautiful are the large white and gold mountain lilies. We have seen whole hillsides covered with these emblems of purity; they are much larger than our Easter lilies and delightfully fragrant. During the summer the railway stations in some sec-

tions are adorned with a floral display. Here almost in groves are the oleander trees laden with their double light-pink or white blossoms; there along the line the traveller's eye is dazzled by the lovely giant daisy, which in almost tree-like size, with innumerable blossoms, is trained to hang over the ornamental stone walls; or again one finds himself bewitched by the aroma of roses in multicolours and which often form entire hedges. A better adapted climate and soil for roses could hardly be found.

Who has not heard or read of the glory of Japanese cherry blossoms or of the grandeur of the chrysanthemums! Of the latter we saw in the back yard of an humble tailor over one hundred varieties; some plants bore both red and white flowers. At another place over one hundred and fifty varieties, daintily arranged, told of the almost magical skill, as well as superb taste, of these florists. Some of the flowers are like large snowballs, petals all smooth and turned in one on top of the other. Others have long filaments sticking out like starfish, or again look like the tawny head of a poodle dog.

The gay rhododendron shrubs adorn both palace courts and cottage yard; blooming sometimes in

white, but more commonly in various shades of red and purple; also behind the farmer's grey hut, on the richly wooded, broken hills, slashed with ravines and waterfalls, and on up the steep mountain sides they grow wild in great profusion. There is the bamboo, fifty feet high, the growth of one season; and interspersed here and there various species of camellia, whose dark-green leaves and double rich red rosettes contrast gaily with the lighter shade of the bamboo. The latter, often adorning some garden nook, with its tassel-like tops abruptly cut off, is graceful and stately and resembles waving ostrich plumes. The camellia tree lavishly laden with blossoms, grows as profusely in different parts of the country as willows in the swamp, and wintry snow storms cannot mar their glory. In the month of January, when yet a stranger in this strange land and out in a lonely rural district, climbing a little boulder-strewn, pine-clad elevation, imagine my unspeakable joy to be royally greeted by dazzling crimson camellia amid its glossy, dark-green foliage; untarnished mosses and ferns at my feet, and glancing beyond, a rippling azure sea studded with snow-white sails! The wintry aspect of the garden has magically disappeared by the continual bloom of rose and petunia. The loquat tree, which

produces both beautiful and delicious fruit, in December, is for weeks crowned with fragrant blossoms, though the fruit does not mature until May.

In parks and temple courts the purple and white wistaria also furnish a grand display. We have seen one vine, the favourite retreat of sullen-faced old monks, covering an arbour forty feet square, on the under side of which hung in profusion and indescribable splendour the purple racemes, sometimes four feet long, till the whole looked like a waving mass of silken ribbons. But in springtime, nature, unaided, offers this priceless treat to the passerby from beautiful trailers which festoon the thickets of roadside and woodland. But space forbids to more than mention the crape myrtle, the sweet-scented magnolia and *mokusei* (oleafragrans); the lotus which transform a slimy pond into a paradise; the iris—in various shades of blue, purple, pink and yellow, as well as white; the great blue campanula; the beautiful hydrangea, which in the process of blooming are successively arrayed in light green, white, pink, purple and blue.

But though nature itself is so enchanting, it becomes exceedingly so with the assistance of these skilful and scientific horticulturists, among whom even temple priests appear as rivals. But in the

parks, when seeking to imitate Western landscaping, their bungling is as conspicuous as their magic skill when following the native taste. Equally so, let no Western imitator be too sure of his achievements in "things Japanese," lest he be chagrined like the wealthy American who, escorting his Japanese friend through the big garden, finally in some snug corner introduced him to what he thought was a triumph in pure Japanese landscaping. The guest raised his hands in delight. "Magnificent!" he exclaimed, "there is nothing like it in all Japan!" Once in our garden, we informed a Japanese gentleman of rare taste of our desire to have the gravelled walk bordered with choice flowers. Close by stood a rough, oblong stone pillar, beside which grew a slender shrub, and at its foot, on the bare brown soil, a tuft of coarse grass. Smiling contemptuously at our project and placing his little soft hand upon the rock, he patted it caressingly and said, "*This* is genuine beauty."

Though millennium-old majestic cedars adorn many a mountain height, curiously enough Japanese art is no more in sympathy with the straight than the rectangular; rather gloating over gnarly and crooked pines, whose horizontally extending limbs resemble the arms of the octopus. Here is

an idyll—a sound and perfect pine, though perhaps only twelve inches in height, and which has cheered some humble home for over fifty dreary winters. There are also plenty of dwarf peach, plum and other trees, whose slender limbs, thickly laden with blossoms, droop down along the knotty trunk like weeping willows. Sometimes they are fashioned to represent objects such as sailboats, pagodas or fish. These dwarfs usually thrive in flower pots and decorate many of the otherwise uninviting entrances of city dwellings. But to have little trees is not at all singular, where vehicles, railway trains, houses, tools, match boxes and almost everything else, including the people, appear little to the foreigner.

For months one can see the pomegranates' crimson bloom; but my great expectation of this being one of the most delicious fruits, due to the fact that in the Bible it is associated with luscious figs, grapes, etc., in the early autumn was doomed to disappointment. The Japanese pear also, though looking like large russet apples, in taste has been likened to sawdust and water. While not attempting to describe the native fruits, mention must be made of one more—the persimmon—by far the best in Nippon. It is of different varieties, all much

larger than those found in North America. Some are shaped like an acorn, others like the tomato. The varieties differ greatly in astringency; some are uneatable before fully ripe, others while yet hard and green are devoured by the natives. A tree in full bearing loses all its leaves ere the first of November, when the limbs are then simply weighted down with a wealth of golden balls.

Bouquet-making, or the art of arranging flowers, called *ikebana*, is a veritable science and forms a part of a girl's education. It has been taught more or less in the flower schools since the sixteenth century. Pupils in the temples engage in these exquisite tasks under the supervision of the dexterous old priest. Though the instruction given by others is often for mere mercenary reasons, the priest—bent on the propagation of his cult—makes this a drawing card for the bashful young maidens with babies on their backs. Sitting on the mats, they gently and cautiously proceed with their painstaking task, selecting material from the little heaps of palm, lily and fern leaves, long-stemmed blossoms and flowering branches. A crude vase and a pair of Japanese scissors are the other requisites. "In arranging flowers little attention is paid to contrasting colours, but linear effects, with some

antique irregularities, are the artist's guiding principle. The way colours are massed together and at times stems, leaves and even petals brutally crushed in the West, seems barbaric to the Japanese. No nation understands so well as they how to twist a spray of flowers or leaf into artistic line." There in that furnitureless, but clean little Japanese parlour, in a corner alcove with slightly raised floor, in an elegant vase is seen a single pine bough, tomorrow a branch of flowering plum, later a solitary azalea or a peony-stalk; corolla and leaves—all displayed in their perfect beauty. A little hanging vase on a polished post containing but a single iris or chrysanthemum, is another magic touch. The richness of this extreme beauty in solitude must be seen to be appreciated.

But it is the artistic vase which in no small measure enhances the charm of this floral arrangement. Those famous, hand-painted *cloisonné* vases which require many months in making and cost fabulous sums, have excited our keenest interest. But expert workmanship and costly material are not the only factors which contribute such singular value to this art. When looking at a vase, the first thing that strikes one is not its material or finish—it is the pattern. We have watched the



FASHIONING COSTLY VASES

Japanese man with a slim purse, unable to buy *cloisonné* ware, finding a comparatively cheap vase answering every purpose. Do you know why? Because that simple and yet intricate pattern so naturally represents his æsthetic taste. An ear of yellow corn with green leaves for its base; an urn-shaped woven basket; a fish; a cow's horn; a *sake*  a long-handled, wooden water bucket; a colossal lotus or morning glory; all are wrought out in clay with appropriate colours. Vases made from short joints of gigantic bamboo sawed off squarely, with a temple scene or seacoast and storks carved on the glossy surface, though inexpensive, disclose the beauty of true simplicity. Innumerable and grotesque-shaped are the vases of iron, bronze and brass, many of which are numbered among cherished heirlooms.

The flora of this Island Kingdom reveals a wealth of loveliness which, amid headlands and inlets, is vastly enhanced by the blue encircling sea. A veritable paradox this is: a boundless panorama of gorgeous scenery, sufficient to entrance an angel's vision, but alas! Yonder idol shrines and temple towers, whose folly and shame the surrounding luxurious groves can never hide nor diminish, reveal the very footprints of the Deceiver of man's

soul. Again, though these outwardly Edenic aspects would remind one of Isaiah's prophecy, "The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose," and though spiritually also this has been realized in part, it affords one a world of joy to reflect that God's never-failing promise shall be fulfilled to the uttermost.

X

WAKING UP THE GODS

IT was four o'clock one chilly morning in January when a Japanese evangelist and a missionary crossed the compound of a large temple. The evangelist, formerly a Buddhist priest, had a very striking physiognomy, quite different from the ordinary Mongolian type; a hooked and peaked nose and heavy tattoo-like lines on the face, and a pair of keen eyes which well-nigh closed when he smiled. In reasoning he went to the heart of the subject with the incisiveness and clarity of one splitting bamboo.

Being yet pitch-dark but for the pale glimmer of a few lanterns, the two noticed a host of human forms at the rear end of the shrine of *Ebisu*, one of the gods of good luck, pounding on the board walls and vehemently calling some one within. "What's up here?" said the missionary. "Trying to get in? Seems like a gang of coolies storming the contractor's dwelling for their wages ere he gives them the slip for another day." "Not that,"

replied the evangelist; "with wooden mauls they are waking up old *Ebisu*, whom they think very dull of hearing and still asleep." "But why so early?" "Because these deluded multitudes believe that the first-comers obtain the richest blessings. Ah!" he exclaimed, "if those fad-loving Americans who gloat over the beauties of Buddhism could only see that little else but sheer idolatry and superstition are associated with this hydra-headed monster."

"Tell me, please, how does a scene like this impress you now?" the missionary queried. "I used to mumble vain prayers amid tapers and incense sticks, and I delighted to hear my own voice while simple souls with bowed heads tremblingly listened outside the screen. But now my heart sickens at the very thought, and but for divine help this subtle power would cause my faith to weaken and die, as carbonic acid gas quenches a flame in some musty mountain cavern. My soul loathes these temples. True, the lover of the æsthetic and the student of art and history haunt these places; also the connoisseurs, who have almost denuded the country of curios during the last fifty years. But like all true soul lovers, I now only turn my eyes hither in pity. Christianity has not robbed me of my love for the beautiful.

“But after all,” he continued, “what of the impressive temple architecture, those tip-tilted turret roofs, gigantic carved doors swinging under the gate towers, the massive stone *torii*, carved lions, dogs and foxes, that you have seen so often; the fantastically arranged furniture; the gaudy array of priests; the mammoth circular hardwood pillars—richly lacquered or gilded; what of the gold-paper doors, the costly screens; rooms containing funeral tablets of great men—princes and even emperors; countless brass lanterns, drums and bells in the belfrys; prodigies of dragon and lotus fountains in the courts; cherry blossoms, wistaria arbours and autumnal maple tints, rippling streams and plunging cataracts; what of these embellished temples with coffers full of ancient treasures? What of it all? I value it only as dust compared to the untold worth of the teeming millions of my idolatrous, priest-ridden brothers.”

“A remarkable contrast, isn’t there?” interrupted the missionary. “I have been greatly impressed by these temples, new and old (one having cost over a million and a half dollars, I am told), which so often command most rapturous views from hill and mountain top, where they nestle beneath the shady domes of many a primeval pine—sturdy, old,

evergreen—far too splendid an emblem of the religion propagated beneath them.”

“ Yes, but when I think that these same hills and mountains are the very land that my fathers trod during the long weary watches of moral night; that they wasted their sighing breath on the smoky old images of gods, from the highest divinities down to the lowest demons; that a passionate soul-thirst led them to exuberantly cast their hard-earned coins into the coffers of avaricious priests or fruitlessly contribute for the erection of countless and multi-form idols from the dwarf to the colossus; I say, when I think of this, for a time all natural beauty affects my senses not unlike the sight of a weeping willow grips an Occidental.”

The missionary stemmed this flow of eloquence by pointing to the stream of new arrivals. In haste they came as doves fly home to their dovecotes in a storm, and clustered around the *chozu-bachi*, a stone laver. “ Here hands are washed, often with dirty water, and then wiped on strips of towelling generally shining with filth and dripping with disease germs. Kindly explain what this all means.” “ Just an absurd rite of purification,” the ex-priest answered. “ And think of it, some would

unite Christianity with such a cult; but might as well talk the north wind down."

"But is not this the strong hope of some of Japan's ablest and most sincere scholars?" his companion chimed in.

"Yes," he replied. "But they have tackled a project that bristles with insurmountable difficulties, for fundamentally the difference is that between noontide and midnight; the one has *the* God, the other, gods. We Christian workers are taught to be girt and road-ready for the lowest mission to the fallen; the Buddhist heartlessly waits for the needy to come to him. Buddhism knows no sanctity for womanhood. Marriage of priests is totally unjustified by its ethics, and therefore, although many priests do marry, they feel and acknowledge no obligation to make provision for the poor women whose chastity they have destroyed, and at their death may just leave them to the mercy of the elements. Does not the Chief Abbot of the greatest Buddhist temple in Japan, who is said to have fifteen wives and fifty-three children, demonstrate in a concrete form his ideal of home? Then I'll cite you a Lord Abbot, in intellect and station at the very head of this army of priests, who within one hour initiated over five

hundred believers into the 'holiness of Buddha' by touching their heads with the tip of a long golden razor, making them spiritually shaven priests—a sure passport to Paradise—and who then went their way weeping for joy! Can you imagine an atom of honesty in this high dignitary," the evangelist stoutly reasoned, "whose intelligence can but witness to the fraud of such a proceeding?"

"But," rejoined the missionary, "we must guard against undue criticism of even the Buddhist religion. Is it not a fact that here and there they have Sunday A.M. services, Sabbath schools, Y. W. and Y. M. C. A., seminaries for the training of itinerant evangelists, street preaching, tract distribution, etc.?"

"Yes, but this is mainly done on account of the realization that Christianity is steadily gaining ground, while they are playing a losing game. No, my friend, the best of Buddhism even is not worthy of a niche in the temple of our God."

But as these two Christian warriors moved on in quest of their daily business, the missionary expressed his utter amazement at the awful magnitude of this constellation of forty or fifty sects and sub-sects of Buddhism which so completely carried the field in bygone days. "Look," said he, "here is

temple after temple lining the entire street, and near one of our city missions alone there are at least five hundred temples."

"Yes, but seldom is any one of these on friendly terms with the neighbouring shrine. While a temple priest, and when in real usefulness I was not worth a handful of rice a day, it was within my province to act in deadly opposition to all the adjoining temples and other sects, for whose priests we prescribed a thousand years in the lowest hell. We all acted on the 'dog-in-the-manger' principle, as you say in the West. Priest and people have forsaken their few ethical tenets, though ever so meagre; and the monks, who are given to increasing idleness on account of this decay, frequently rent the best parts of their quiet temples as summer residences, in order to defray current expenses."

"The poor priests must be hard up for money," the missionary suggested; "for a short time ago, when passing along the outskirts of town, I saw one in the veterinary business. The farmers had brought a number of sick horses, and the priest, dressed in his temple robes and standing near a stone god, had the horses led before him and lanced them on the neck."

"I've done a little of that in my day," the ex-

priest replied; "but mind you, it is no veterinary treatment—pure priestcraft. The peasants, you know, are the right kind of material for these canny rogues to ply their trade on; and these which you have in mind simply desired the benefits of priest and horse god for their sick animals."

"This reminds me," said the other, "of a story I once heard when visiting a mountain height concerning the weather god installed in a cave way up on the pinnacle. When the weather is not to the peasants' fancy, they temporarily suspend his authority, and rolling him out on the sod, give him a severe thrashing. Is it possible that the Japanese beat their gods?"

A look of derision was stamped on the evangelist's countenance; the corners of his thin lips twitched spasmodically, and with a sudden outburst he exclaimed, "Yes, and that is not all." Then with typical Oriental plainness of speech, he stated that a community of country people, because the rain god failed to answer their impassioned prayers, dragged him over the dusty country road. Still unresponsive, he was dipped into a W. C. and hung up, the peasants being quite sure that he would now produce a copious shower in order to cleanse himself."

Quickly suppressing an uncontrollable grin, the

missionary said, "A far more militant community than the people where I live, who in time of drought I've often observed stacking their long-unused water wheels in front of the old shrine of this god, and meekly praying for rain. But no sooner does this deity pull a big cork from the bursting clouds than temple bells ring and the light-hearted peasants place thank-offerings before the shrine."

Deeply engrossed in this interesting conversation, the two had halted in front of a temple which was by no means unfamiliar to the Japanese evangelist, and his countenance assumed a pained and pitying expression as one of his former colleagues, a Past Master in black arts, in vividly coloured and gold-embroidered surplice, proudly brushed past him with a cold and malignant look. "I am happier than he is by a thousand worlds," the evangelist said, while his eyes followed the monk to the temple where, accompanied by his satellites, he sailed mock-seriously about the altars, enchanting the ever-swelling multitude that jammed through the gates where the two Christian gentlemen stood.

"Look here, what is this crowd really after?" the missionary asked.

"M'ah! a needy lot they are, but think mostly of

temporal blessings," his partner replied. "They seek honour, health and wealth; the father is troubled about his forlorn son, the wife about her drunken husband; the young woman is in search of a suitor, or the childless, silently longing and pining for the touch of little hands."

"But I think it amazing," the missionary said, "that these bright and intelligent Japanese should suffer it to be told that they worship more idols than the Koreans or Chinese."

"Sad indeed," the ex-priest articulated in a seeming strain of distress, "yet perhaps far worse than cold idols are our ancient traditions, covered by filmy glamour; the hoary legends enshrouded in a sort of diabolical halo which create in the fond worshipper, except for God's supernatural power, an armour-plated resistance to Christianity."

"Still truth will ultimately triumph," the missionary repeated with infinite dignity. "I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but as sure as the heyday of Buddhism is a thing of the past, I predict that the patient and generous seed-sowing of the gospel and the living influences of Christian civilization brought to bear on *this* generation as on no other, will result in an unthought-of and abundant harvest in the one to come."

The evangelist, however, remembering how in other days Christians in Japan attracted the stones and curses of unbelievers, and how to-day the unfavourable utterance of various pro-Buddhistic officials are not merely harmless stage thunder, prudently remarked that Buddhism—Shintoism included, for that matter—had yet by no means capitulated; its towering bulwarks are gradually being undermined, though in the interior particularly, instead of actually tottering, in various places they are simply adamant.

“Yes, ‘truth will ultimately triumph,’ but mark my words, the field will not be ours without an obstinate and well-directed struggle,” the evangelist said as he vigorously blew his nose into a sheet of rice paper which he drew from his kimono sleeve.

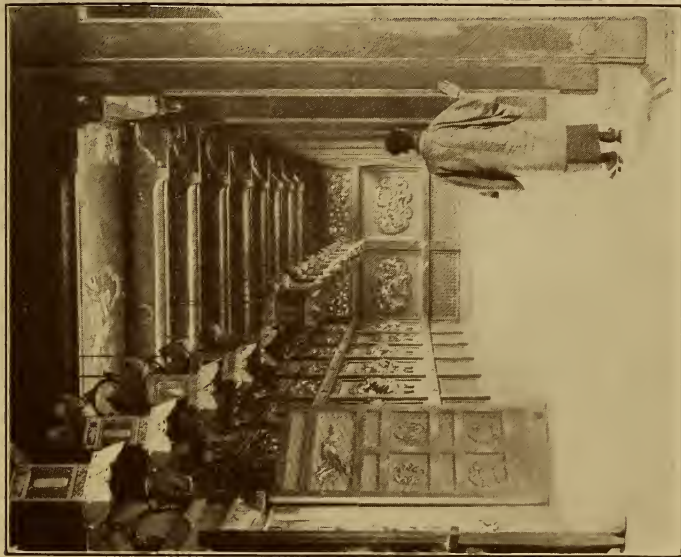
Just then the missionary saw a bevy of moon-faced priestesses with shaven scalps issuing from a near-by temple gate, and for a moment their audacious inquisitiveness almost disconcerted him; but turning to his friend, he rejoined, “You have defined the situation very clearly; here is an unparalleled opportunity: may the Japanese church rise to the occasion!”

XI

“ KENJUTSU ”

“ **A** H, the Japanese delight in fighting,” we heard one of them say recently; but indeed he scarcely divulged any secret. College and high school boys in hundreds and almost thousands may at times be seen with swords and guns out for military drill. But it is to be questioned whether these are ready to enter the actual fray as gleefully as their forefathers. Conscripts are often heard to speak deprecatingly of the military service, and schemes and tricks to exempt themselves from it are not uncommon. Parents whose sons were drafted for the late war are known to have not always offered them gladly.

The sword, as of old, is still playing a great rôle in the polity of this empire; it forms part of the imperial regalia. This weapon also adorned the belts of the old *samurai* until the edict of 1876 abolished this custom, when precious metal in great quantities was heaped in the curio shops. Before that time, however, the *samurai* would just as soon



APPEALING TO TEMPLE GODS



A LESSON IN JU-JITSU

have surrendered life itself; for the sword was the badge of this aristocracy and the etiquette that regulated its wearing, though ever so trivially offended, was often the "cause of murderous brawls and dreadful reprisals. To touch another's weapon or to come into collision with the sheath was a dire offence, and to enter a friend's house without leaving the sword outside was a breach of friendship." A servant of the host brought it in and laid it upon a sword-rack in the place of honour near the guest, to be treated with all the politeness due to a visitor. But the bare hand of the most intimate friend dared not touch it; a silken napkin being kept for that purpose.

Indeed Old Japan had also other weapons of war, such as the bow, crossbow, spear, lance, shield, broadaxe, halberd, bludgeon, roped hook, pitchfork, etc. Wrestling also was included in the military arts. The sword, in ancient days, was a straight, double-edged weapon three feet long and was brandished with both hands, differing from the modern one-edged sword, which is slightly curved toward the point. Some of these excelled the products of Damascus and Toledo, having been known to cleave piles of copper coins without even nicking the blade. As the trade of fancy basket-making has been per-

petuated in one family for generations, so also were certain families renowned for their marvellous skill as sword smiths.

The *samurai* were originally the Mikado's soldiers, but later, during the reign of feudalism, they constituted the warrior class, which until the restoration lived in the castles of their *daimyos*. The two remaining classes of Japanese society were the nobility above and the common people below. By the *samurai* the profession of arms was considered a man's only sphere of exertion. Learning was often discarded and literary pursuits confined to monastic walls, and treated as a priestly luxury. Never did they feel thoroughly interested except when conversing on military affairs—warriors were they to the backbone.

Japanese history is replete with accounts of these chivalrous little men; even mere lads were prodigies in this art. Often these would traverse the country, each one in quest of a worthy opponent, or new ideas to be added to his self-invented art. One of them, when but a youth, devised what was termed the two-sworded style, where the fencer, with a short sword in his left and a long one in his right hand, held them crossed to receive the blow. By a slight movement of the two weapons the defensive

posture was assumed. For the opponent to break through such a combination was a vain effort, but to withdraw would give the two-swordsman an easy chance to make a dart with his lower blade. This inventor drew knightly pupils from all over Japan, and for a long time no other fencer could cope with his skill. These champions, heading a host of adoring admirers, when defeated each in his turn, fell an easy prey to fits of murderous jealousy. For in duels, at times some modest youth, or grey-headed, shrivelled-looking, weak little man, would snatch the laurels from one of magnificent physique, and who had long been lionized by hosts of supporters as the first fencer in the country. Thus jealousy, murder and revenge followed one another in rapid succession. These avengers swept the country far and near in search of their victim, and when they finally met, it did not mean a mere "knock-out," or a broken bone or scar; the sentiment of the Roman gladiator, "If I do not kill him, he will kill me," was here carried out to the letter.

Indeed this warrior class had its code of morals; they were chivalrous, and various incidents point out a large-hearted, magnanimous spirit; but their record as a race, if their own history must be believed, is one of carnage and blood, as witnesses the

“ Ear Mound ” in Kyoto, where lie buried the ears and noses of thirty-nine thousand Chinese and Korean soldiers slain in 1598; or another mound north of Kyoto, which is a relic of a war of but a little later date, where the heads of forty thousand warriors were interred. But this time they were the skulls of their own brethren.

Their character reveals not a little of the Inamori instinct. They have been known to carry a grudge in their bosoms from youth to age, and though, like bloodhounds scenting the track of the fugitive, these, when overtaking their victim, would go about their determined task with much ceremonious coolness. Men aforetime, as well as to-day, before despatching their victims have entertained them at a joyous feast. Is this a characteristic of this race only? Surely not; but if “ treachery to friends is common enough in Japanese history,” as the historian affirms, what could we expect of their treatment of their foes? But no matter how blood-curdling might have been their plots against a foe, to go to the shrines and with clasped hands and head bent low invoke the aid of the gods was not an uncommon thing.

In “ Japan in Days of Yore,” Mr. Denning speaks of one of those great fighters named Musashi, who

while with this motive approaching a temple, found another warrior with a loud voice and in a deeply earnest manner pouring forth his supplication as follows: "O thou all-powerful *Tenjin*, I am one whose occupation is fencing. But there exists a man called Musashi, whose skill in swordsmanship is superior to mine—him I cannot defeat; nevertheless, being the slayer of my adopted father, he is my mortal foe. I beseech thee to strengthen and teach me and to enable me to crush my foe." As he rose, imagine his astonishment to find himself confronted by this very Musashi, whom he at once recognized. Soon they were crossing swords, and one of the hottest contests ensued.

But Musashi, great swordsman though he was, met his match in an aged man with magnificent white hair and a pair of eyes that seemed capable of piercing one's being. In his younger days he won many a laurel, but on account of fierce jealousies arising, retreated to a little mountain home. Here it came about that Musashi's proposal for a round at fencing was accepted by the old master, who entered the arena, however, without a sword. "Shall I fetch a sword?" Musashi asked. "No need of that," replied the old man, "anything will do; here is a pot lid, it will serve my purpose."

This was a wooden lid, a foot in diameter, with a handle in the middle. Now Musashi had ever respected the aged, but now could scarcely conceal his contempt for such a weapon. Though the warrior with his two swords had in all combats carried the field, the old man warded off his blows like magic, and also delivered a sharp, back-handed stroke on Musashi's arm, which caused him to drop his sword. With the other sword, however, Musashi commenced slashing in fury at his opponent. But all his efforts proved futile, and the grandsire with his pot lid administered blow after blow, till conquered, the younger fell insensible.

But *kenjutsu* (fencing), that time-honoured art and cherished inheritance from the *samurai*, is to-day cultivated among student classes; more or less among those in commercial ranks, and is said to be obligatory upon all police officers. The latter in many places participate in these performances once or twice a month. By the special invitation of the chief of police of a certain city, we attended these drills a few times. The instructors, who came from a distance, possessed a fine physique, and constant practice enables them to handle in succession as many as fifty sturdy little men. They have not only their daily appointments with different police

forces, but at night are engaged with special classes. Besides the instructors, there are some notable champions among the pupils. At one end of the spacious hall, on a platform, were the chief official and a number of guests. At the other end, squatted on the mats, sat the participants, ready and waiting for their turn, or intently watching the combat in the arena below. All were clad in a sort of padded armour, covering shoulders and breast. The head was protected by a steel basket. Now with their wooden swords they advanced, and after a ceremonious bow, began the contest. Imagine a combination of the prowess, speed and determination of the tiger, with the strength of a sturdy little ox, all focussed upon the opponent.

With both hands they brandished their long wooden swords with agile and quick-motioned strokes which reminded one of the automatic hammers in boiler shops. The clash was simply fierce and made the more dreadful by their constant shrill shouts that rang like steel; this to intimidate their antagonist. Once or twice there would be a little lull—they would retreat a few steps, then looking as fierce as the *Ni-o*—the giant guardians which stand at the entrance to Buddhist temples—the fight was renewed. Swift and fierce blows were dealt

out, and this, which seemed like a miniature Port Arthur, raised the question, “ What must have been the real ! ” When the exhausted pupil submitted to his fate and sued for quarter, like the old-time vanquished warrior, he bowed his head almost to the floor in feigned humility. One noteworthy subject was the little thirteen-year-old son of a champion. This boy made an astounding attack upon the instructor, and though little, his skill and wiry physique enabled him, when exhausted, to renew his tactics a number of times, until the honourable Chief was obliged to call him down.

The late General Nogi, in a speech given in Tokyo, stated that one travelling in the West finds Japan inferior in everything; that she has nothing to be proud of but her success in war. This perhaps need not be disputed, but it is nevertheless remarkable to what degree the military spirit of the entire race is evinced even among the smallest schoolboys, whose dexterity in handling a weapon, though but a bamboo pole, or wrestling in a sand pit, demonstrates the same courage and reckless contempt of life.

Ju-jutsu, which in other days also composed part of the military education, is sufficiently known in the West to require no explanation. Just the rela-

tion of a little personal experience at police headquarters will suffice. The spacious hall floor was covered with thick Japanese mats, and the instructor in *ju-jutsu* came in for his honours. This practice is not obligatory upon students in the schools, but strictly so upon all police officers. There is a variety of over eighty different tricks embodied in this sort of wrestling, and it takes more than a mere muscular man to make himself proficient in this art. In Japanese it literally means "soft art," but does not appear altogether soft when one views the performance. In addition to the policemen, there were a considerable number of typical, raw-boned fishermen, who coming from their seaside villages, though not regular pupils, kept one of the instructors remarkably busy for hours.

Oh, the strength of endurance that was displayed even among the smallest of these little men! In the more advanced lessons in *ju-jutsu*, the instructor now and then finds it necessary to deal quite severely with his pupils. While the struggle proceeds and both are down on the floor in a seeming death-grip, he may artfully choke the other with his crossed hands drawing up his shirt collar. Should the subject surrender, no farther advances would be made; otherwise it has frequently occurred that

these men were choked into insensibility, lying there without one pulse beat for five or ten minutes, pale and apparently lifeless. But the professional is always supposed to do this without actually causing death.

The event came to a close, and as we were asked to take a photo of those present, the crowd of iron-jointed little men afforded not a little spectacle as in the auditorium they fumbled around and struggled into their unaccustomed uniforms and boots, scattered amidst stacks of armour and swords. The friendly Chief, of fine physique—head and shoulders above most of his race—with a dignified air, facing us, asked: “What will you drink?” “Water, sir,” we answered. He thought we were jesting, and soon a waiter, dressed in a sort of blue jeans, served us with sparkling wine. A polite declining induced this regal son of Nippon to try another experiment. “Beer!” he shouted, as though he had now discovered our real favourite, and without waiting for a reply, the humble servant, crouched on his knees, received the order to get a bottle of beer. Then we were pelted with all sorts of questions; some needed no direct answer, but others did, and among them was one put in sheer

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disappointment, "Why do you not drink beer?" Thus, while sipping a few thimble-like cupfuls of insipid tea, amid respectful listeners, in friendly converse, we were permitted to give an impromptu temperance lecture.

XII

BY LAND AND SEA

ACCOMPANIED by a fellow-countryman, we chanced to board a train way out in an interior section, which still bore the undefaced marks of Old Nippon. As usual, the first thing we observed was the little baby cars—freight cars especially, reminding us of the account in the paper of almost an entire train being blown off a bridge into the river. The strength of the wind could be guessed by the size of the cars. Ours was a narrow-gauge line and wound like a snake trail among the hills and valleys, naturally not advancing very rapidly. Our companion, being fleet of foot, furnished not a little mirth to the passengers by jumping off a few times and trotting along for mere exercise.

A little earlier, when the morning sun had just kissed these thousands of islands, we saw a young man basking in the glory of the sunrise, and with clasped hands standing on the cramped car platform, offering prayer to the gods. But characteristic of Japan's variable weather, soon the heavens

began to wear a tired, overworked look, and here and yonder rain clouds chased themselves and, bumping into each other, occasionally slopped over into showers. Dragging into one little country station after another, whole platoons of simple-hearted farmers in grotesque garb and clumsy *geta*, in fear of not getting a seat, rushed with painful haste along the gravelled platforms. "But look," we remarked, "where are yonder people headed for?" There, in backwoods fashion, along the narrow paths of the little rice ponds, came in tandem, droves of belated men, women and children, panting helter-skelter toward the train. A third-class ticket between their teeth, umbrellas and bundles in their hands, and with more bundles the size of two or three bushel baskets strapped on their backs, we saw them cram into the little cars.

"Shame on them, shame on them!" we involuntarily uttered; for strong man after strong man thrust back women and children, who were mercilessly left standing in the rain, and had to consider it a favour to at last find a standing place in the two-foot aisle. At the consecutive stations some of the passengers alighted, but many more entered. Now it was a bevy of schoolgirls; again a drove of fishermen with heavy boxes carried by means of

shoulder poles—bringing them all into the car. But whoever wore Japanese kimono, the women had theirs drawn up to their knees and the men almost to the loins, with amazing indifference. At the more principal stations, little bandy-legged fellows in short pants and with caps of gaudy colours, yelled out their wares. Tobacco, newspapers, tea—scalding hot and sold in earthen pots with tiny cups; hot milk in bottles; all sorts of beer, *sake*, lemonade and other drinks; also *bento*—Japanese lunch, good, bad and indifferent, put up in little thin cedar boxes with a pair of chopsticks stuck in the string.

Some of those water lovers, who had travelled quite a distance, hurriedly flocked out of the cars and availed themselves of the benefits of the lavatories which are found at a few stations. Water splashed over their faces and wiped with a flimsy towel jerked from their *obi*, like gophers they dashed back into the little car openings. When the little whistle of the engine screeches out the starting signal, all must be on board, and although anxious passengers have at that moment arrived at the gate with tickets secured, instead of being assisted aboard, they may just stand and with open mouths look dejectedly after the departing train.

In a near-by shed a gang of coolies were handling

freight. Like vacuum sweepers, they inhaled fearful amounts of dust, for while in the process of lifting their burdens, all yelled in unison, "*Yahen-yato—yahren-ya*," in about the same key as the bray of a donkey. But what was also interesting about these dwarf-like creatures were the large hieroglyphics which each wore on the back of his *obi*-tied frock, and which a stranger might easily mistake for the insignia of a football or cycle club. About this time the interior of the car attracted our attention. Fluids were being gulped from teacups and bottles, and lumps of rice bolted down in magic haste. Some smoked, jested or snoozed; for the time being very comfortable, all but the bent-over forms of some standing women.

Purposely we were riding third-class, though there are also second- and first-class cars. We observed some foreign-dressed gentlemen boarding the second-class car; however, two or three men in Western clothes came crowding into our compartment. One had his socks drawn up over his trousers and his cuffs fastened with strings instead of buttons; another one's tie was snugly secured around his neck *under* an erstwhile white collar whose unfastened ends rubbed against some stray bristles on his chin.

But the "bumpety-bumpety" train lulled quite a number into fly-catching, jaw-hanging slumber. One lying on a bench, had his feet stuck out of the window; another one had his nose up against his neighbour's bare toes; another, perched on the seat like a fowl on the roost, was certainly an acrobat, for though continually nodding, he ever escaped toppling on the dirty floor. "Look here," said my friend, "one just wonders whether or not Western civilization is here but little more than a veneer. Splendid improvements are visible in and near the cities and in some smaller towns, but while travelling through these rural districts we seem to find comparatively little else but 'Old Japan.' There are the thrifty rice fields, though just what they were hundreds of years back; but yonder also, on those bald hills and barren slopes, are the almost omnipresent and untidy straw huts, with all their implied misery and squalor." "True," said I. "But we ought not forget that elsewhere in Japan's interior, though yet ever so old-fashioned, there are remarkable signs of thrift and a gradual change for the better."

By and by we neared the city of Tokyo, and we had a number of occasions to call our friend's attention to really praiseworthy improvements. But

he always rewarded us with just a sort of chilly "M-hm." Upon arriving at the capital, we were speedily bowled away in 'rikishas to another station. While waiting in the first-class room, where a promiscuous crowd, some arrayed in gorgeous silken kimonos, others in Western garb, were seated on upholstered sofas, in came a string of red-capped porters one after another, with camel-loads of parcels and even small trunks, and stacked as many as possible on the centre table. One of those "red-caps," headed by a gentleman in a dashing foreign suit, brought a steamer trunk on his back and satchels in his hand. The gentleman took off his coat. "The heat is certainly not so oppressive," one thought. Next came off his waistcoat, then his collar and tie and dress shirt even, and about this time our party began to blush with shame, particularly on account of the ladies present. But consternation seized us when this dandy divested himself of trousers also and stood there complacently in a suit of red underwear. He then carefully folded his garments, leisurely placed them in his trunk and donned his native attire. "Did no scathing denunciations fall from the flower lips of those young women?" you ask. No! They not even blushed or frowned. Nobody was worried but

ourselves. As to our travelling companion, he chuckled triumphantly, saying, "Aha, *there's* your civilization!"

This central depot was dotted and packed with human figures; here and there stood a keen-eyed policeman, who resembled the one we met on the train with a pack of criminals dressed in copperas-coloured garments and with big reed-woven baskets slipped over their heads and faces. This headgear is intended to save them unnecessary mortification should they chance to meet with some acquaintance. Some were securely handcuffed, while others only tied with a light rope which the police as invariably carry in their pockets as the sword by their sides. We inquired of one of these officers concerning this great concourse of people, whether anything unusual was in the air, and whence they were going. "Many of these have only come to 'see off' or 'welcome' their friends or distinguished visitors," said he, "and," pointing to some slot machines, "from those one can get his platform ticket for a five-*sen* piece." Directly we were confronted by another officer, who was evidently desirous to show his proficiency in foreign languages. "*Gehen Sie back?*" rang in our ears as clear as the click of a musket. He had obviously gotten a little mixed up

when picking his nuggets from conversation books.

But the journeying public of Japan is an immense army. Travelling being comparatively cheap and home cares few, the common as well as the higher classes, in whose veins runs the blood of the old roving pilgrims, will board the trains on the slightest excuse. On the main line (a broad-gauge) run splendid, commodious express trains, dining cars and sleepers. "In place of 'man-pull-cars' Pullman cars," one writer worded it; still from an American viewpoint there is yet much room for improvement.

"This vast concourse of kindly-faced Japanese must certainly know and thankfully remember from whence all these rich benefits came," we remarked. "Think how the lords and princes had to travel in other days; and the late Emperor, when removing from Kyoto to the present capital, journeyed in the Imperial ox wagon drawn by two beasts single file." "Yes," replied our friend, "I am familiar with all this, but I know also that the present schoolbooks, when lauding the grand progress of Japan, do not as much as hint at the glaring fact that all this is theirs as a virtual gift from the West." "Well," we rejoined, "we have knowledge of at least one man, a managing director of an electric railway

company, who when addressing a number of business men, pointed out that the cars on which the visitors rode were of American construction, all the apparatus of American make; so were the rails, girders, pumps, condensers and generators. The whole system was designed, constructed and operated by a graduate of Stanford and Purdue Universities. The director also mentioned that the president of the company, as well as himself, were American students." "Splendid acknowledgment," was the reply, "but I hope they'll be as generous when American visitors are not present."

Suddenly our friend whispered, "Look there!" Right behind us in the throng I saw a sight which, though regrettable, exhibited a Japanese trait pure and simple. Occidentals when in a brawl are usually noisy, but these people can quarrel under cover. All we could see was an elderly woman with a stolid gaze looking intently upon a young girl still in her teens. But like a flash the old dame applied a few fists full of ginger on the poor girl's back. Another motion, a grunt—and all was at an end, as far as we could discern.

Cheerful sunlight again streamed through the rifted clouds. A large company of frolicking picnickers with their *sake* gourds and supplies of



THE STURDY VEGETABLE PEDLAR



CHILDREN MAKING MATCH BOXES

lunch, boarded the train for the near-by seashore. As innocent as these *sake*-drinking holiday makers have usually been described, yet at many of these outings the indecent language indulged in and the disgusting postures displayed by some of these revellers, must unmistakably have the vilest effects on the many children present. The train sped on past one village after another. At one hamlet, roadsides and commons covered with oiled paper umbrellas stuck up in the sun to dry, were among the many curious sights that arrested our attention. At a few other places there lay on mats many heaps of little match boxes—the uniform size being only two inches long. Groups of little girls, scarcely more than babies, pasting together these tiny boxes, suggests one reason why matches here are such a cheap commodity.

For quite a distance the track skirted the ocean, and as an unfavourable wind wafted insufferable odours through our windows, we turned and saw the sandy beach covered with sardines spread out to dry. Enchanting scenes and stifling smells—one of Japan's paradoxes! Farther on in the lowlands, on a perfectly level stretch of hundreds of acres, we noted the process of salt-making by evaporating sea water, which comes and recedes with the tide.

These and all other salt manufactories in the Empire constitute a government monopoly, which fact was brought forcibly to mind when a small package ordered from America was confiscated by the customs officers. For convenience' sake we left Tokyo by second class. Toward evening we reached a town renowned for its famous temples, and as the train glided past, many among the motley host of passengers in that fearfully crowded, gloomy and suffocating car, dropped their cigarettes and tiny pipes and, standing, clapped their hands and made sanctimonious bows toward the shrines.

"Have we to spend six or seven hours to-night in a car like this?" our comrade nervously inquired. Of course he was annoyed, and why should he not be? The disorder was something shocking. The unmannerly passengers, some wearing large caped mackintoshes over their kimonos, occupied space enough for three. The seats were used as a sofa, and bags and baskets were arranged at both ends as a barricade, while those who boarded the train later were forced to hang on the edge of a seat or even stand. Though long delayed, the humble request of the porter at last compelled some of these "train hogs" to reluctantly relinquish a little of their space. These people, accustomed to sleep

in hermetically sealed houses, could not abide an open window even on that balmy spring night.

“Four hours more—I cannot endure this hell of nicotine,” our friend remarked as his watch case snapped once more. “Let’s take a sleeper, then,” we replied. But alas! The sleeping car proved no exception to the others. More air-tight windows, more clouds of tobacco smoke, for which the women as well as the men were responsible. When the little train guards finally called out our station, with swimming heads and stifled breath we finally tumbled down the platform steps.

At this stage of the journey we took leave of our travelling companion and repaired to the near-by wharf of a steamboat company. “Don’t sit on those mail sacks,” a petty official imperatively shrieked at one of a bunch of simple countrymen who were sleepily staggering about. Curiosity led us to discover that imperial mail sacks, no matter how old and dirty, are not to be desecrated thus by any common mortal. For us it was left to decide between a combat with fleas in an adjacent hotel and a hard bench in the waiting room. Suddenly we were espied by some young student, who with an ingratiating smile preyed upon us with the universal request for a little English. We greatly ad-

mired his persistence, though weariness of the flesh forced us to politely decline.

It was about two o'clock. The bench seemed so hard. But we managed to snatch a little sleep from the tedious hours. Of a sudden a terrific clatter of many *geta* sounded through the halls below. Nearer it came, and as about forty pair of wooden clogs ascended the big stairway, thundering vibrations increasingly broke upon our ears. In a second of time we were sitting bolt upright on the bench, and lo, there confronted us a throng of smiling young lassies from a Girls' School, who with their teacher had come by steamer from their peaceful island homes to take a holiday trip to a few of Japan's Meccas, such as Kyoto, Nara and Ise. These young ladies greatly provoked the porter by stamping on and thus damaging the nice linoleum floor with their destructive footwear. But being "green"—from the interior, their simple innocent manners invited from all present the broadest of tolerance.

As there were in this waiting room but a few benches, most of these youthful travellers remained standing, staring at one another. But all of a sudden, unbidden and without ceremony, they quietly but carefully began to make their toilet. "Must

we then sue for quarter?” was our thought. For amid the glitter of tiny mirrors, the brandishing of quaint and crude wooden combs and the flutter of long, shiny black tresses, one felt exceedingly out of place. But this strange and unexpected phalanx of “night riders” made our escape impossible.

Later on, toward dawn of day, just as though the teacher had, general-like, given orders, toothbrushes came into play, and sashes and upper garments were adjusted. Amid the low murmur of feminine chatter, excessive and repugnant snuffling revealed the entire absence of handkerchiefs. “*O-cha, o-cha!*” (honourable tea) they all shouted like candy-loving children as a monstrous big teapot, almost too bulky for one little red-cheeked lassie, appeared. She poured the exhilarating fluid into diminutive cups, which were then served to the entire company. Hurriedly each student, with the assistance of chopsticks, annihilated a neatly-packed lunch, consisting of thick rolls of rice wrapped in edible black seaweed. This done, marching orders were given. Each with a travelling bag slung over her shoulder, with hoof-like sounds they again thunderingly descended the steep stairway, and in a platoon disappeared.

XIII

A PARADISE OF ISLES

WHEN steaming out of Osaka Bay, the island of Awaji lies in the forefront of the eastern gateway to the famous Inland Sea, and is the dividing point of two waterways; to the left usually ply the big ocean liners, while the passage to the right is followed by larger and smaller coasting steamers. On one of these, in the autumnal moonlight, we embarked one evening. Gazing over the tranquil ocean surface, we now and then caught a faint glimpse of a distant island. It was about here where in 1850 Commodore Perry's black man-of-war made its appearance, and the grandfather of one of our Japanese friends made a fancy sketch in ink of this strange monster which attracted the frightened natives in droves to the near-by seashore.

As we ploughed on we soon reached an area where sea and land seem still in conflict for supremacy. Anticipating this, we did not close our cabin doors, and like rabbits slept with one eye

open. At dawn, ah, what a marvel! Here and everywhere, trying the pilot's utmost skill, lay quaintly shaped, tiny islets and islands, some bleak and barren, others with only a few gnarly pines, like sentinels, lining their ridges. When the ruby, fiery orb of morning, in all his splendour, flashed upon an azure sea, with islands studding the whole like so many molehills on a meadow, floods of glory also broke upon the grey villages pasted up against the steep hillsides of the larger islands and the poetry-encircled headlands whose outer pinnacles and cliffs were almost invariably crowned with some lonely, primitive shrine or temple. Stone-built quays, dividing prominent inlets into little harbours, extended to groups of grey, bleak rocks "not made with hands."

Now coasting for a short time along the mainland, hundreds of scattered villages of low-roofed huts, straggling from the water's edge halfway up the mountain sides, peacefully basked in the morning light. In the terraced fields, mere garden spots, hundreds of feet above us, phantom-like beings with a bit of white around their heads could be seen moving about, adding vivacity to this mysterious creation. Among the islands again; these, however, for a time much larger and with moun-

tains of higher altitude, and on account of rising almost perpendicularly out of the sea, more majestic-looking. They towered up out of the placid, dark blue waters, dotted with schooners and fishing smacks, which with flapping sails dragged lazily along, till on that calm and balmy morning it seemed as though one were gazing on miniature Alps from Lake Geneva.

In places the sea is unusually shallow, and our rather large steamer with great caution slowly advanced. Just at this time the tide is very low, and the otherwise submerged reefs and islets are a visible bare sand beach, on which fisherwomen and children, who have ferried across on little flat boats, dig out the sea clams for a meagre livelihood.

At the port of Onomichi, huts of fisher folk, with big nets strung up by pulleys, line the water's edge. Farther on there is a large Oriental fish market. On the road above, crowds of pedestrians and jinrikishas move along toward the railroad yet higher up, eagerly waiting to reverently greet the Emperor's special. Looking still higher, there stand the stately old temples and pagodas as though seeking the friendship of the precipitous, boulder-covered mountain sides and sky-piercing spires. On the same elevation are clusters of other shrines and

temples and bell towers, surrounded by groves of evergreen and maple. To this sacred height leads a continuous flight of stone stairs that wind past quiet villas and peach and plum groves.

That a thriving commerce is carried on in this section is indicated by the numberless burden-fraught sampans and other craft gliding to and fro; carts drawn by coolies yelling "*Ho hui ya, ho hui ya,*" as they feel their way through the crowded passages, and the men and women carrying goods from the steamers by means of a pole across their shoulders. Our vessel had barely stopped when fruit and newspaper vendors came climbing as cleverly as monkeys over the gunwale, and little sampans laden with many kinds of fruit, persimmons, apples, pears, grapes, oranges etc., drew up within our reach.

About here, slopes and hillocks yield splendid harvests of sweet potatoes, and this section is also famous for the variety of large and delicious persimmons it produces. The reader must still imagine himself surrounded by an Eden of islets and islands of all shapes and sizes. None but expert pilots can safely follow these aquatic trails through such a labyrinth. Upon entering the fortified zone, instructions are given not to do any photographing;

but after all, were the enemy ever so well supplied with maps and topographical information, the idea of one cruiser chasing another would simply mean a smart game of "hide-and-seek." In such waters Japan's many little torpedo boats come into good play; but conquering an enemy would add little glory to her flag, when considering the natural barrier this wilderness of islands furnishes to a hostile fleet.

Our steamer, feeling its way as it advances, must needs turn successively toward all the points of the compass and pass through a narrow cut of scenic landscape. Large volumes of coal smoke heaving in sight indicate that we are nearing the Kure naval yards. Thousands of workmen inhabit the hut-covered hills. In this notable bay lie anchored some war hounds; one of them quite near, the *Popea*, is a trophy from the late war with Russia. Close by is the arsenal. These powder magazines are constructed under natural, solid rock-bound and rock-crowned islands. Here a wireless station, there frowning forts, and yonder, the Naval School of Etajima.

Sampan crossing from island to island carry cows and ponies; and old men and women, young men and maidens—all alike show their skill in

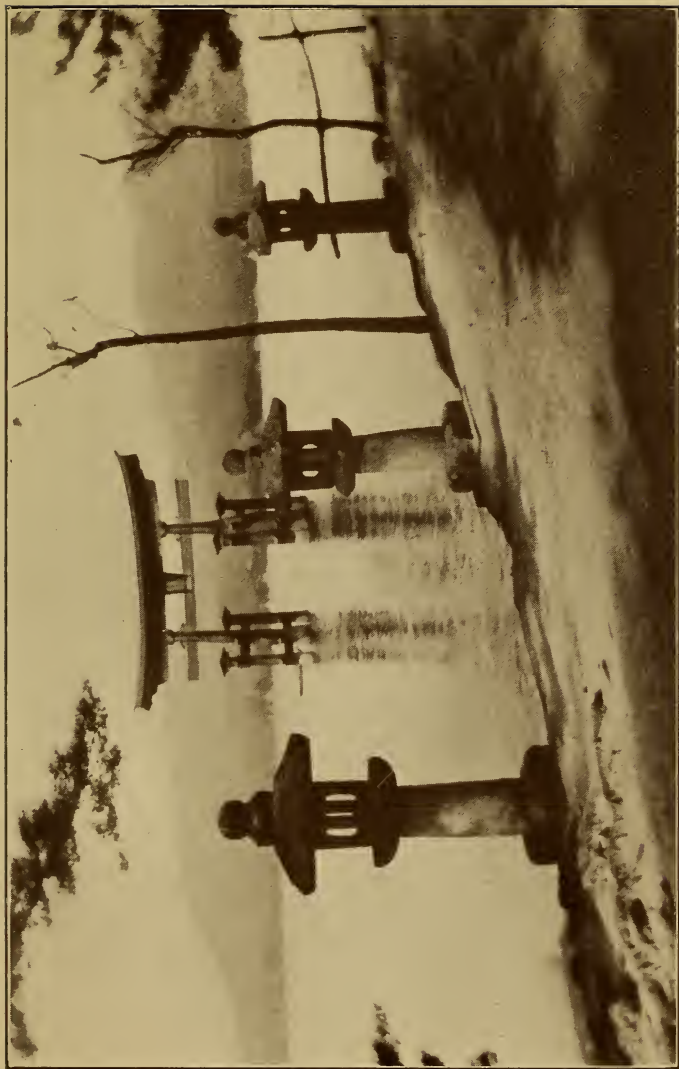
handling the old-fashioned Japanese paddle. Next, passing here and there steep, pyramidal mountain tops rising abruptly out of the sea, we run into Hiroshima Bay. It was from this place that many of the soldiers, en route to the war with Russia, took passage. Here also, on the near-by islands, were the camps of thousands of Russian captives. While proceeding toward the loveliest of scenic spots of all the Inland Sea, Miyajima (described in the next chapter), we passed a large island, the shape of which—a mere steep mountain—our French companion in travel quaintly designated “Napoleon’s hat.” In the last moments of the setting sun, above the jasper-coloured ocean mirror, east, west, north and south, the mountain chains were shrouded in a light-blue haze, and far above it still, soft tints of pink and purple bespangled the entire firmament.

XIV

ENCHANTING MIYAJIMA

MIYAJIMA is not blest with majestic Niagaras, nor adorned with the sublimity of Alpine Mountains. It is a rather small but nevertheless very beautiful place, so much so that the Japanese consider it one of the three grandest sights of the Empire. But to fully appreciate its good points one should reckon with their æsthetic taste. Among many, it is just one small mountainous island, thickly wooded with evergreen. Legend and history hover around this spot like butterflies amid sunshine and flowers. Besides the priests, idol-carvers and innkeepers, as well as the fishermen whose huts nestle beneath these groves of maple, vast multitudes of pilgrims and pleasure seekers make long journeys to reach this celebrated site.

Several emperors, as well as renowned *shoguns* and great *daimyos* of other days travelling in lacquered ox wagons drawn tandem by two burly beasts, escorted by servants, bearers of musical in-



THE WORLD-FAMOUS *Torii*—FACING THE SHRINE

struments and other adjuncts in keeping with the days before the bustling West bumped in, selected this shrine at which to pay their homage to the gods. Formerly births and deaths were religiously forbidden here. Even now, in the case of a sudden birth, the mother is asked to absent herself from the island for a month. Corpses also are invariably taken to some point on the mainland for burial. Here are no howling dogs nor rattling jinrikishas. It is perhaps the only place in Japan which in these days of political and commercial hustling still manages to retain something of the peaceful atmosphere of the old régime, in spite of the occasional visits of ugly torpedo boats and other unhandsome murder machines that plough through these placid waters.

We had barely landed and finished supper at a Japanese hotel—an electrically lighted, three-story building surrounding an open square filled with miniature mountains, dwarf trees and fountains—when we hastened out into the narrow but crowded and busy main street. The first thing that met our gaze was a brilliantly lighted excursion steamer lying at anchor, which just a few minutes before had arrived, having brought a party of about eighty American visitors down through the Inland Sea,

who now briskly advanced through these curious, bazaar-like thoroughfares. We counted it a great privilege to meet and mingle with our countrymen.

The next morning we were abroad before daylight—our object being to take a little observation of the movements of the Shinto priests and votaries of this famous centre of the cult. Feeling our way through the narrow, crooked passages, we ascended and descended flights of century-worn stone steps in the dark, toward the place whence came the plaintive notes of a flute played by a priest in adoration of the patron god Kiyomori and the spirits of all other ancient sires. Mind you, Shintoism differs from Buddhism, in that it is not an imported religion. It is simply the worship of ancestors; but the Japanese, without the least compunction of conscience, may embrace the deities of both faiths.

One of these shrines, Itsukushima, whose main structure, wings, porches and long, deep-roofed corridors cover a large area on the seashore, is built out over the water on piles. In the dimly lit halls some few devoted worshippers reverently knelt with their heads almost to the floor, and the hush of the twilight was only broken by their repeated hand-

clapping. Directly, however, a man in his *geta* changed the order of things. Whether he meant to walk on his tiptoes down through the plank-floored corridors, we could not quite distinguish in the dark, but his gait was martial and the noise thunderous; as he passed, he politely greeted us with "*O-hayo*" — "It is honourably early."

Ere the sun flashed through the vistas of green mountains round about, we were busy taking photos — among the first being the famous vermilion-coloured *torii*. It stands a good distance out in the sea, approachable, however, at low tide. This great unique structure is unlike all other *torii* in Japan in that its two vertical pillars (of gum wood) are each supported by two more. Just outside the court of this shrine, in whose aquatic muddy bottom a number of cranes were strutting about, in a red-painted stable is a sacred grey horse. Often these animals are literally but skin and bone, "every rib being visible as they move about their confined sheds, hungrily watching for the mouthful of beans occasionally purchased by the charitable pilgrim." A more wretched position for an animal of such naturally active habits can hardly be imagined. These may be steeds of army generals whom they erstwhile carried through eventful campaigns, but

who, before their decease, now offer them to some renowned temple with a view of giving the horse an honoured repose in his declining years.

Not far away stands a quaint monument—a relic of the Russian war, looking like the hull of a steam boiler, but which really was the casing of a mast on the enemy's man-of-war, full of rents and holes caused by bombshells. Right next to it is another trophy—a cannon captured from the Russians, which was officially installed here before the country's gods, with the object, doubtless, of intensifying national glory in the popular mind. All around the road that forms a semicircle along the beach stand a row of uniform-sized Japanese stone lanterns. From under the heavy beams of an ancient gate leading to a shrine hangs a big circular lantern about five feet in diameter. Another immense shrine is "The hall of a thousand mats." This structure, about 80 x 150 feet in dimension, is said to have seen hoary centuries. It is now ghostly in appearance and decaying, but its tile-covered roof is of enormous weight, due to the trusses that are formed by frames of heavy beams, being built one upon another in diminishing squares up to the ridge-pole. But its former glory is no more: near the centre stands a miserable and neglected altar—the

whole a veritable "habitation of dragons and a court for owls."

Near-by is also a five-hundred-year-old, tall and impressive-looking pagoda. From an architectural standpoint it must at one time have been beautiful. Indeed it represents heathen idolatry and a vast amount of silly and sinful superstitions. But its neglected and tottering appearance is no necessary proof that the Japanese dualistic system of false religion is at a breakdown. The government, in order to preserve some of these ancient, artistic structures from decay, has granted considerable sums of money; and that such edifices as this are left in dilapidation is most likely due to lack of funds. Our readers would no doubt find it very delightful to stroll through these bazaar-like shops, lining the crooked, narrow streets. The nicely arranged, grotesque wares and fancily carved boxes and trays, the manifold variety of highly coloured toys, bamboo and lacquer ware, all bear the special crest of Miyajima, a *torii* artistically carved.

Another renowned site, called Momijidani (maple valley), in interest and beauty surpasses any other of these unique scenes. That which we shall describe now is not commonly found everywhere in Japan, and though the best talents of Japanese land-

scaping are called into play here, it is mainly for the sake of auspiciously impressing and bewitching simple pilgrims and visitors from great distances; as, for instance, we caught a whole company of these little magicians decorating the pathways with extra bits of shrubbery, planting evergreens and grasses in front of tea-houses and quaintly encircling the whole with a frill of cement and stone—doubtless with the thought to particularly smooth the last possible ruffle from the minds of those eighty Americans.

Most of the Japanese thoroughly believe that there is no country as beautiful as theirs. True, it is beautiful, but a ceaseless repetition of seacoast and fisher huts, evergreen hills and little mountains, terraced fields and islands, after a time becomes somewhat monotonous. Once when showing an intelligent Japanese friend an album containing bits of beautiful park scenes and magnificent buildings of an American city, with not a grunt of praise and but an eye of envy, he remarked, "Oh, how the Americans like to exhibit their beauty scenes!" But in order to excel our friend in magnanimity, though well remembering the delights of our own land, reference is here made to what struck us as exceedingly beautiful, particularly so from the

Japanese viewpoint of art. The native artist is quite apt to represent nature in too gorgeous colours; but here neither brush nor pen could do justice to such an Edenic nook—this park in a nutshell. It is a collection of the loveliest in nature, perfectly harmonized along streamlets and sloping hillsides by highly trained æsthetic minds.

Where this little man may show deficiency in appreciating the grand, sublime and majestic, he exhibits his greatness in small things. Here, beneath cedar, pine and cryptomeria, artistically arranged heaps of grotesque, beautifully veined rocks are mounted near tiny, crooked, sand-strewn hill paths, surrounded by patches of delightful green lawn in hollows and on hillocks, and interspersed here and everywhere by vari-coloured azalea, shrubby evergreens, rustic bridges and dwarfed trees; quaint little cottages with roofs of cedar bark stand on high posts in the placid streamlets, whose transparent surface reflects their image, and on whose white-sand covered bottom many-coloured, tiny maple leaves—as though cleverly inlaid in plaster—can be clearly seen. Artificial waterfalls, fountains, banana trees, ferns, palms and mossy, lichened rock beside dewy caverns; the famous, starry-leaved and finely incised Japanese maple sin-

gularly adorned in its autumnal splendour of pink and crimson, stone lanterns, women and men in graceful native costume, stoically and slowly moving about in that tranquil morning sunshine—the whole unfolded before our gaze—a perfect bit of creation.

XV

BURSTING THE INCUBATOR

“**I**T is designed henceforth that education shall be so diffused that there may not be a village with an ignorant family,—nor a family with an ignorant member.” This is the closing sentence of the Emperor’s Rescript regarding education, issued in 1872, which Mr. Mori, an aged school teacher, reverently read in our presence. “During the subsequent forty years,” he proudly remarked, “this noble principle has fructified into an abundant harvest. To-day the remotest country village has its primary school.”

“But was popular education not known in Japan ere *Meiji*?” “*Naka-naka*” (by no means), he sagely responded, bobbing his bald head; “let me tell you what Prince Katsura once stated: ‘Formerly education was for the *samurai* class only. Some of the sons of the inferior classes thought it a fortune to enter a temple school, where the Buddhist priest taught rudimentary arithmetic and the Japanese alphabet. To acquire a commercial

education in those pre-Meiji days, there was but one "class-book," and bright youths could master the whole in three days.' But see," the old gentleman continued: "in 1909 the number of elementary schools reached twenty-six thousand three hundred and eighty; the teachers numbered one hundred and thirty-four thousand and the army of pupils has swelled to nearly six millions."

"Then the school budget must be enormous," we remarked. "To be sure," he replied, "but that over ten thousand of all the teachers have even of late years receive less than ten *yen* * a month salary goes to prove that the remuneration is as low as our position ought to be exalted. And," he continued, tapping the table with his fan, "you know our country is very poor and we must not complain."

"Ah, thanks be to the gods," he exclaimed, as out of their hollow sockets his eyes flashed with the fire of *Yamato*, "the Department of Education, with a fatherly heart bewails the fact that many of us, their humble servants, are so sadly underpaid." Then from the little table around which we squatted, he drew a crudely bound volume of reports, and deftly running his fingers over a *soroban*, the Oriental counting machine, in a few

* *Yen* = 50 cents.

moments raising his head with a look as cold as the figures, said, “ Honourably condescend to look at this fact. ‘ The average monthly salary of the elementary school teachers of last year (1909) was only *Yen* 16.40.’ ”

“ But, Mr. Mori,” we put in, “ while rejoicing with you over the wonderful strides made in education, forgive our suggesting a few points which, however, might not have been unobserved by you. One is the extent to which ‘ red-tapeism ’ seems to be carried in the elementary schools. A great number of my friends among you hard-working teachers, I notice, must be at their post at 8 A.M. and remain till five and sometimes six P.M. But knowing that school opened at nine and closed at three o’clock, I naturally asked some of them whether they were so excessively busy. ‘ No,’ one of them replied, ‘ we only remain overtime because we think it courteous to tarry till the principal withdraws.’ ‘ But why does not the principal leave earlier?’ I queried. Now this question, as you well know, because it concerned their superior, they were naturally reluctant to answer. But one, particularly confidential, ventured to say that the principal, in order to prove his enthusiastic devotion to duty and to avoid criticism from *his* superiors be-

cause of any apparent lack of interest in his charge, must remain indefinitely. It would appear that these helpless teachers are made a sort of scapegoat because of the needless rules which govern the principal. One cannot but be heartily sorry that some of those hollow-cheeked and emaciated young fellows are thus deprived of the precious time which they long to devote to bodily and mental recreation."

The wary old man, though realizing the strength of our position, simply grunted "H'm," with a nod of acquiescence, and sipped a few more drops of green tea.

"Regarding the term, as well as the general subjects taught," we continued, "perhaps there is not such a great difference between Japan and the West, is there?" "Perhaps not," said he. "By a recent Imperial Ordinance the term has been extended from four to six years, and the subjects taught in this course comprise morals, Japanese history, language, geography, science, drawing and painting, and gymnastics. To this curriculum manual training, etc., for boys, and sewing for girls may be added as supplementary."

"Fine," we assented; but for fear of committing an intrusion we avoided some other pointed ques-

tions. The schools always seem to be crowded, generally giving a stranger the impression of too many chickens for one hen. In different localities the number of students is far in excess of accommodations, and the classes must attend alternately in fore- and afternoon. In the cities and larger towns many of the buildings would do credit to any school board, but in the country they are often frail and flimsy, sometimes being merely old straw-covered temples. But be the building what it may, and the grounds large or small, to a Westerner's eye they always seem out of proportion to the astonishing crowds of black heads which burst from the doors and throng the remotest corners.

In the meantime, however, this veteran *sensei* found it necessary to close the *shoji* of the adjoining little room. Often have we passed houses at night when a strange noise like this caused me to halt in amazement. The four or five youngsters around the lighted lamp hanging close to the matting in this little room, each one regardless of his neighbour, some in a high-pitched key, others with a sonorous, low mumble, were preparing their lessons. These vocal efforts were participated in by some of their elders reading shoddy newspapers and cheap magazines. Though loving those almond-

eyed girlyes and bristle-headed boys as his own life, in pure Japanese fashion mentioning them in derogatory terms before others, the old man grunted, "Those good-for-nothing, ignorant creatures disturb you shamefully." This statement was a call for us to rise to the occasion and, true to custom, be as extravagant in our compliments of the children as our host was in his disparagement.

"No disturbance whatever," we stoutly affirmed, and begged the privilege to hear the youngest of the crowd show his skill in reading those "turkey tracks." With seeming reluctance he yielded, and rather than moving the company into our room, we were escorted into their midst. One lad, like many of his comrades, was an adept in the art of drawing. Marvellous was the skill of a bashful lassie, though behind in years. Dipping the camel-hair brush in India ink, she could write the most complicated Chinese characters with firm and graceful curves, "and with the ease and certainty of Giotto in turning his *O*."

Walking home through the dark, we mused on the stupendous task Japan had and still has, in bringing her educational system up to the standard of the West. Libraries in common schools are yet hardly worthy of mention, though they may be

found in higher institutions. Still, hopeful omens are appearing above the horizon. Passing through the spacious halls of a Girls' Normal School, in the library we joyfully noticed, among the many oddly bound volumes, a reference Bible. In the history class room the walls were lined with large prints of a number of the earth's great men. Though it seemed almost like the Emersonian collocation, "Jesus, Socrates and Buddha," yet those of the West—Homer, Aristotle, Socrates, Luther and others were separately classed from the Asiatics, where with pleasure and surprise we noticed *our* Lord first in order. Then came Confucius and other sages.

There is one great fault found, however, by various writers, with Japan's common school system; namely, that the subjects taught are too limited and abstruse; and in the second place, the system is defective as a means of turning out good citizens. In the higher institutions the student is abandoned to intellectual gorging. He attends about twenty-five lectures a week, daily sitting in a poorly lighted and sometimes overcrowded room from four to eight hours, scribbling in his "almighty" notebook. When he returns to his lodging all desire or energy for independent study is exhausted. This

lecture system may account for the fact that the Japanese mind is "rather a knowing than a thinking mind," as their own scholars have been free to admit.

In classics Confucius is substituted for Plato, and the "Chinese classics occupy the place which Latin and Greek have held in English and American education for centuries." Nerve-racking and comparatively barren are the students' exertions in this wilderness of Chinese literature, which necessitates the learning of fifty thousand or more ideographs.

With every cycling year, sons of the soil constantly swell the student ranks in the higher institutions of learning. The sentiment that the farmer is the very basis of the nation seems to him devoid of the true ring, since as an individual he is still regarded with but scant respect. Now he bursts forth beyond the narrow horizon of the slimy paddy-fields in which his forefathers have contentedly "toiled and moiled" for centuries. The young man's *primary* object is in many instances not the building up of a well-rounded character, and the noble discharging of his duty as a man and citizen, but rather an easier life—he wants to become a distinguished man. With his vision concerning

manual labour entirely out of focus, this eager aspirant after distinction rather than knowledge rushes through the Middle School on to the High School and even University. He and many more like him, on the long course of life's race, easily stumble and fall, and not unnaturally must live the life of disappointed and embittered men.

Take an expression from a class of twenty Middle School students as to their choice of a vocation, and the replies will usually run thus, “Statesman,” “General,” “Diplomat,” “Doctor,” “Lawyer,” “Banker”; but “Merchant” and “Scientific Agriculturist” we have only heard a few times. Marvellous air castles! Not long ago a certain writer estimated that among the sixty-three thousand graduates issuing yearly from the various educational institutions, over eighteen thousand have, apart from manual labour, absolutely no vacancy to enter.

“Japan gives precedence to no religion,” a certain writer states. True, differences of religious beliefs obtaining among instructors and students render the inculcation of any one faith impossible. Yet is the above statement somewhat misleading. Granting the thankworthy fact that various educators, and the government at large, look upon

Christianity with the greatest of tolerance, the masses still regard it as an alien religion. That none of their priests ever set foot in the schools of Japan is also true, but it is far from correct to state that "no religious lesson is ever given in any shape or form." For the moral instruction taught in all schools below the University is vitally related to the religion which "this people are in the habit of claiming as the source of their success and virtues—the religion of emperor and ancestor worship." For an illustration: Do teachers ever take their schools or classes (and how often they may be seen!) to renowned shrines and mountain resorts without invariably leading them to the sacred portals for worship? In 1912 the late emperor had barely been buried when the people by thousands daily flocked to his tomb for worship. On the first day on which the public was admitted, over seven hundred pupils of a Girls' Higher School were marched to the imperial mausoleum; they purified their hands and mouths with water specially prepared, then knelt down on the gravel, reverently bowing their heads to the ground.

New Japan is to be looked for in the schools, where uniforms of all kinds, muskets and military drills, often play as conspicuous a function as do

books and letters. In the towns and villages of any section may be seen long platoons of little school-boys at play, marching with bamboo poles for swords and chubby babies strapped on their backs in lieu of knapsacks, singing their national anthems with a warlike roar.

All common and some higher grade schools have their athletic exhibitions, which take place on the school grounds twice a year. Friends and parents of the pupils being invited, come in immense crowds, and greatly contribute to the success of this gala day. Nearly all performances are really contests in which the participating boys or girls evince a remarkable degree of training. One of those gatherings which we witnessed was most exciting. Some of the contests were similar to those of the West;—others again were entirely novel. But monkey-like agility and almost lightning speed, along with a good deal of pluck, seen in these little brown-faced youths, make the beholder feel as though he had been transported to some mysterious planet.

At that time a bunch of boys aged about fifteen were bent on mischief. During a lull in the exercises, they strayed past our house, and with a well-aimed rock embellished one of our windows with starry figures. Being near the gate and thoroughly

understanding the situation, we chased those fleet, short legs down a main thoroughfare, whence they darted, like gophers to their holes, into narrow, winding passages between ramshackle houses and mud walls. There they got a little advance of us, not being well acquainted with needles' eyes such as these. Unable to near them on foot, though knowing their movements, we walked in another direction home. Then we located the whole troop on the sea beach, calmly partaking of their lunch, which they had brought in their long kimono sleeves. Stinging was their surprise, and as we stood near one of the dear boys, the others, with a wink of the eye, signalled a detour, and like a flock of snipes in a gust of wind, almost in an instant they were out of sight. But we, too, had taken care of our boy, and with him in one hand and the wheel in the other, we took a walk to the school, where our young friend, with big beads of perspiration standing on his forehead, made an unwilling roll call of his accomplices to the principal. This episode ended very pleasantly, and never since have stones found their way through our windows.

At another boys' school, amid the many contests which tested the competitors' skill and endurance, was one where a set of eight or ten ran a complicated

race. The signal gun had barely popped when they were already stalking over a rope-net, in which some of them of course got entangled, while others leaped over them; at the very next breath they had to crawl through the rounds of a ladder which was laid in their path, and what a jamming they had when two chubby fellows tried to squeeze through one space. Soon the whole bunch essayed to be first in running over two long beams suspended lengthwise along the track. Then again they were up against some meshes of rope hung up on poles as high as their heads, through which they had to make their way; after which, and to finish the race, they climbed up a scaffolding ten feet high and, hanging by their hands, moved on forward ten or twelve feet and then leaped down. The whole thing was executed on a three-hundred-foot circle.

The reader must remember that this does not profess to be a complete description of either the excellencies or defects of Japanese schools; but considering that no such a thing as a public school system was known until four decades past, and also what moral and educational standards the youths of former days were gauged by, it is not a wonderment that there are so many defects, but rather that such strides of progress have been made.

What if students should aggravatingly practice their laughable "English" on you; write letters whose odd and outlandishly constructed sentences are so mirth-provoking as to cause one's sides to shake; what if some of those young men should appear unappreciative of one's kindness or forget to be as polite to the foreigner as to their own people; what if the most exemplary ones of the faculty should be known, though but a few times in the year, to indulge in drinking bouts and attend *geisha* sprees—for which customs the moral standards of the country are responsible?

Though cold facts could be cited to corroborate the above, it is but fair play to also take account of the good points. All honest observers would gladly voice the sentiment of Bishop Welldon of England, who in speaking of the Japanese Foreign Language students, for instance, in words of highest praise commended the teachableness of school teachers, clerks and even military officers; these showed a persistence where young men of other countries would give vent to impatience or be too proud to take the trouble of learning in such an humble way. Great is their thirst, and an education they will have at any cost!

XVI

FUNERAL PAGEANTS

FUNERALS in Japan are a kind of solemn festivity; as a rule they are imposing affairs, bordering on the spectacular. Processions among the wealthy, in rural as well as urban districts, are almost equal to Fourth of July parades. The cortège is headed with banners, then follow a hundred or more men, each carrying in a vase a sort of bouquet of evergreens, then also as many of flowers, five or six feet high. Then may come a similar crowd carrying artificial flowers. In other cases again the flowers are placed on gaudily painted, four-wheeled carts drawn by coolies. Next in order are a few large cages, either borne or also on carts, which contain a flock of pigeons to be released at the grave with the design of accompanying the departed spirit to his abode of bliss; then about twenty carrying cakes and fruits on trays. In the centre of the procession are a number of men bearing boards with inscriptions in Chinese char-

acters, quotations from the classics and famous sayings painted on them; also the posthumous appellation given to the deceased by the priest of his temple.

The elegantly adorned bier, often supported by eight coolies dressed in a white muslin garb, is preceded by a number of pipers clad in flowing, copperas-coloured garments, playing a doleful, monotonous dirge. Two or three yellow-skinned, hard-faced old priests of high rank, arrayed in scarlet and gold and wearing silken mitres, dash out of the house of the dead, and under cover of an enormous crimson umbrella, which a servant carries over each one's head, they severally proceed to their ancient-style palanquin, which four men dressed in light blue, stiffly starched, kite-shaped coverings, bear by means of a fifteen-foot, richly lacquered ridge-pole. These august personages having entered, at once disappear from sight as the attendants close the little silk-curtained doors. They in turn are followed by about ten priests riding in jinrikishas, adorned in their finest regalia and with heads freshly shaven. Each of these priests is attended by his satellite, and that one in turn by a humble temple servant, carrying a big vermilion-lacquered and oddly shaped folding chair.



'RIKISHA PULLERS—DRAWING LOTS FOR PASSENGERS



FUNERAL FLOWER CARTS

The mourners and relatives are next in order; the men wear a cheap, ridiculous-looking head covering made of rushes; the women are generally dressed in white, with gauze wrapped about their heads. If the funeral is from a well-to-do city family, the procession of gentlemen sympathizers may appear in frock coats and plug hats; commonly, however, they, as well as the ladies, wear their best kimono.

Before the funeral leaves the house, it is customary to give all the friends a feast, when *sake* drinking is quite freely indulged in. The coffins are ordinarily square wooden boxes, sometimes mere tubs. This latter method has always appeared to us as most fearfully revolting. When but a few weeks in Japan, we were attending a peasant funeral. An unexpected delay at the house occurred because the coffin had not yet arrived; but when it *did*, our uninitiated eyes failed to recognize it. "But where is the coffin?" we queried. "This is it," was the reply, pointing to a new but cheap tub about two feet in diameter and less than three feet in height. Like a flash our thoughts took cognizance of all that must be associated with putting the earthly remains of a full-grown man into such a cramped-up position, with an ugly lid crowded

over his head—and genuine horror possessed our hearts.

The corpse is dressed in a white kimono; friends shave the scalp and place some of the hair in the temple for worship, or again it is buried with the body. This white kimono shroud is always crossed from left to right, while when alive they invariably cross it from right to left—except foreigners, such as ourselves, who became an object of derision and the cause of consternation to the Japanese in our home when they saw us come down the stairway—*dressed for burial*, in a cool summer kimono ignorantly flapped from left to right.

When the Buddhists bury, they place six *rin* in the coffin (ten *rin* is equal to one-half cent), representing the Buddhist “Amen,” consisting of six syllables, “Na-mu-a-me-butsu.” According to law, no Japanese can be buried before twenty-four hours after death; intended of course to make sure there is no mistake. It is stated that most Japanese, especially among the poorer classes, die at night; said to be due to the impure atmosphere of their tightly closed, unventilated and overcrowded little rooms. When the funeral departs from the house, at the front door one of the friends sets a bunch of rice straw on fire, and the house is swept. The

immediate mourners being ceremoniously defiled, must for a period of nearly twenty days burn purifying fire before the gods; at the end of which time they send presents to the friends, indicating that their period of purification is completed.

Buddhism has always favoured cremation, and hence in various graveyards, large and small, the foreign visitor is confronted with a repulsive-looking place, the crematory. The procession to this place may seem quite decorous. But immediately the scene changes. While the coffin is shoved on an iron sheet within a brick furnace and a brisk, raging fire is kindled by the coolies, that the immediate relatives squat in a circle, smoking their indispensable little pipes and telling stories, is by no means an incredible tale. At such times nauseous odours wafted by the winds contaminate the air; in particular is this the case where the crematory often consists of nothing more than a few stones under an open shed.

A Japanese funeral hardly ever impresses one with that peculiar solemnity which is always seen at such occasions in the West. The more educated behave themselves with considerable dignity; but that they have just been indulging in eating and drinking, and also because of the peculiarity of

temperament as a people, it is no uncommon thing to see one burst out in laughter or noisy demonstrations while in the funeral cortège. There are no bursts of weeping or any other audible signs of great grief at funerals, though now and then the anguish-wrung heart of one of the lady mourners may find a little relief in a few tears, which, however, with gestures of self-reproach, are hastily wiped away. But the great majority of her sisters, to say nothing of the men, appear stolid and cold-hearted. These grief-smitten mortals have no wooden hearts and are not entirely devoid of sentiment, but seem to refrain from shedding honest tears not so much because of superior self-control or strength of character as on account of their bondage to an antiquated, rigid custom, which if they should violate, would likely bring down upon them a torrent of sneering laughter.

But it is gratifying to state that Christian funerals are conducted with more decorum. We have followed the bier when the shades of night had already dispersed the gloomy tints in the western sky, visits of this kind to the abode of the dead at night not being at all infrequent. The simple reason for this may be that the grave-diggers chatted and smoked too long; the two men with the coffin

carried over their shoulders by means of a pole, had not arrived from town any earlier; or that the haughty old priest suited his own convenience in coming. We well recall one such dreary, lonesome night. The only child, and a *boy* at that, of a noble Christian man was to be buried by the side of his mother. How touching the scene when his father and the remaining relatives gathered for the last time around the casket, and what is so exceedingly rare, tears of sympathy as well as sorrow flowed freely. The funeral quietly left the house, each one in the procession carrying a white paper lantern. The bier, borne by two men, was preceded by another carrying a square post on which were inscribed the child's name and age, with some Bible quotation. It was nine o'clock when we passed six or seven old Buddhist temples lining one side of an entire street, behind which the burial took place. Arriving at the last temple, we stood before the large, clumsy, rustic gates, which soon swung open, and through a narrow passage along a high mud wall, proceeded by the help of our little lanterns, without which we would have stumbled against a lot of old stone idols.

How dreadful the place! Only a few gleaming lanterns—no star nor moon was shining. One side

of the cemetery was lined with massive old pines and the other by a high wall—all adding to the gloom of a dark night in a heathen graveyard, whose many thousands of silent sleepers had died without the blessed Gospel. The little tombstones stood strikingly close together, reminding one of an immense phalanx, all subjects of the “pale horse and his rider.” By the open grave we stood upon tumbled-down idols and tombstones, and elbowed a large stone god whose head had crumbled away years ago; this fact was of no little significance to us as an earnest prayer was offered and the parting song, “There’s a land that is fairer than day,” echoed back from the near-by temples a prophecy of the downfall of heathenism.

XVII

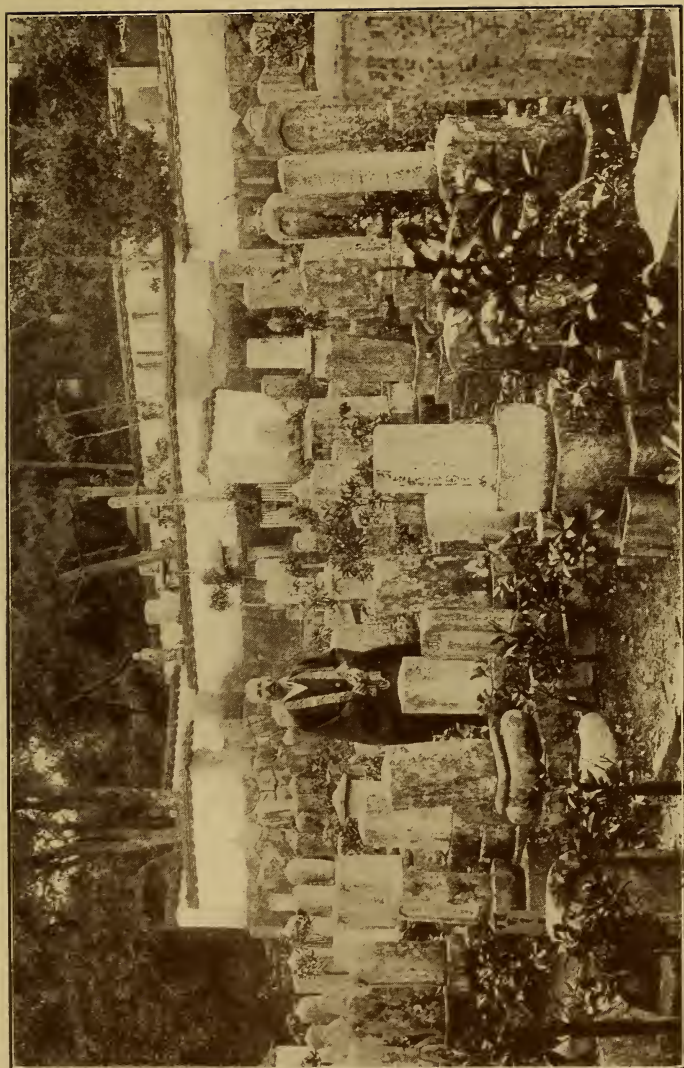
HONOURING THE SPIRITS

IT is early in the morning when darkness and quiet are still brooding over the earth and Japan's busy toilers have not yet risen from their slumber. The missionary himself, still asleep, becomes suddenly half-conscious of something unusual. Hark! What means this tramping of many wooden shoes, and the weird-sounding "tap-tap" of a little gong? The noise becomes more real, and looking out of the window, we see a crowd of men and women with a sprinkling of white paper lanterns passing our house on their way to the near-by seashore. The procession is led by one carrying a Shinto lantern and a tray, on which are cooked rice and other morsels. A mysterious feeling creeps over the beholder as these hastily rush on at a half trot. The gong is still beating, and a few in the crowd chant in low tones some plaintive native melody. Why in such haste? Is some one sick, or is there any distress? Another scene explains the foregoing.

One evening about eight o'clock, while out near the beach, we are met by a crowd similar to the one seen that early morning. Tramp, tramp, they hasten on to the water's edge. All is dark but for those white gleaming lanterns. Halting, they sing, swaying *en masse* from side to side. Suddenly the leader of the procession advances, and wading out a short distance, he gently places the tray upon the ocean's bosom. Next we see his large white lantern floating away upon some rolling billow. Of a sudden the light is extinguished, and serves as a signal for the company to return homeward.

We walk along the shore a few steps, attracted by another light, thinking it to be that of some fisherman, but it is simply a repetition of the same sad story. Only a tossing lantern fastened to a stick. Curiously enough, the whistling winds are not sufficient to extinguish the gleam of the fast-decreasing taper.

These processions are a part of Japan's dualistic religion—Buddhist and Shinto—and usually occur as often as the funeral. It is believed that during forty-nine days after death, the spirit dwells up underneath the roof of his own home, and at the expiration of this period the friends of the deceased give him the final farewell at his ascension to a place



THE PRIEST IN GHOSTLY CONVERSE

which is a substitute for the Christian's heaven. No matter whether the departed dwelled near sea-shore, lakeside or river, on this memorable forty-ninth day this farewell ceremony ends at the water's edge.

A short time after, about the middle of August, there followed the annual *Bon* festival, when fond recollections of lost faces and broken ties most mightily stir the sympathetic chord in the heart of this entire race. This festival continues for three or four days, during which time it is believed the ancestral spirits return to their homes. "At such a time, the ghostly visitors are banqueted and fêted with a pious attention which few of them ever enjoyed in their terrestrial existence." In the evening twilight of the first day, at the front entrance hangs the globular lantern whose soft light is intended to guide the departed spirit back to his earthly habitation. For the same purpose the streets also are lighted with many of these bright-coloured illuminators.

At the bend of the road, beneath the dome of gnarly old pines and luxurious evergreen, stands the moss-covered shrine of the village patron god, around whose venerable premises mourners for the departed now and anon have loved to linger.

A sturdy youthful son of Nippon, still partly arrayed as his ancient sires, with knightly mien and solemn stride, approaches to light the two stone lanterns that silently mark the mysterious portals. He places a little ladder against the stone shaft, claps his hands and reverently bows; then ascending, lights the frail taper inside the tiny paper window. Stepping down, he claps his hands and bows again, then vanishes in the darkness.

Human beings throng the winding thoroughfares as noisily, though also as sadly, as on their loved ones' funeral day. Amid them can be found members of the various homes that have returned from distant colonies and islands of the Empire to unite with their own kindred at this annual memorial day. The little taper in the lantern at the doorway gradually flickers out and the clang of the temple bell ceases; but lo, early the next morning, troops of town and country people, bearing flowers and pine twigs with incense whose fragrance resembles the lavender, make for the quaint cemeteries. These are placed as an offering before the little stone slabs that tightly pack the graveyard. Out of a wooden bucket with a toy dipper, copious supplies of water are poured upon the tombstones, quenching the ancestors' thirst.

Now their religious frenzy reaches its climax. With the approach of another night one can hear from every cottage the almost constant tapping of little bells, and a passerby, through the *shoji*, may see the entire household, though but stupid fishermen or simple farmers they may be, with heads bent low, in audible monotones piteously praying before the family shrine. Their inmost soul is grieved and stirred; and though believing their loved ones' spirits back with them, it's but for one brief moment. Everywhere, through the daytime and especially after sunset, one is constantly haunted by this gruesome and weird and monotonous tinkling of bells. The third evening the multitudes take the flowers and incense from the home shrines to yonder seashore, where to the departing spirits they bid another sad farewell.

Reverting to the second evening: a band of Christian workers, carrying red paper lanterns—each crested with a white cross—wind their way past festive throngs through the narrow streets to a central temple, where wily priests in spectral robes, amid dim candle lights, with occult incantations enchant the soul-blind masses. Halting immediately in front of that gloomy structure, to my amazement the native preacher hangs a number of these con-

spicuous lanterns high up on the cornices of one of the two large stone *toro* which serve as light-bearers to the gods. The clamour of the ribald crowd at once ceases; they swarm around us, and rather than thinking our cross-inscribed lanterns a desecration of their *toro*, they even allow the preacher to ascend to the third flight of its stone steps, whence he, like some prophet of old, rams at their superstition and idolatry; solemnly and with marked effect speaks of the world's Creator and Saviour and clearly defines sin, God's righteousness and awful Judgment Day.

XVIII

THE FARMER AND HIS DOMAIN

DESPITE the fact that the enormous increase of factories draws many sons of the soil to the cities, about sixty per cent of the population of this country is still engaged in agriculture. Japanese farm life affords an unusual amount of interest to the newcomer. Though yet so primitive in their ways when compared with American or European methods, these peasants' primeval trend to industry at once differentiates them from Eastern races of a more sluggish type. The farmer here, as well as of any other country, finds his the most independent life, though from statistics obtainable, most of this class are among the poor, who are forced to annually struggle for a meagre livelihood. For instance, the total income of a village community of some eight hundred persons annually amounts to about six thousand five hundred dollars, or about eight dollars per head.

But the most astonishing point here is that out of this total income these villagers pay no less than

fifteen hundred dollars, or about twenty-three per cent, direct taxes. Then when we add the indirect taxation, the total easily reaches thirty-five per cent. If history can be relied on, this crushing burden has not been his merely the last few years, but even in the days of feudalism it was said of him that what the farmer dreaded was not so much war, as famine, plague and above all the tax-gatherer, who exacted something like seventy per cent of the produce of his fields. One *daimyo*, who had imposed new taxes and demanded more rice than it was possible for the distressed farmers to raise, resorted to most drastic measures. Those who refused or were unable to pay, were dressed in a rough straw coat—such as are still used by the peasantry in rainy weather. Their hands were tied behind their backs, the straw coats set on fire, and of these wretched victims some even burned to death; the excruciating pain led others to drown themselves or end their lives by violently bumping their bodies against the ground.

To-day, however, these industrious, hard-working farmers can, as a family of, say five, live on an average of but ten dollars per month. Their fare is thus extremely simplified—the luxury of salted fish, which otherwise is considered a low-priced arti-

cle in Japan, is indulged in about once a week. Many eat as the staple food a poor kind of rice, and many more barley and rice mixed. Beans and sweet potatoes are by-products and add a flavour to their diet. The natives are very fond of greens, young sprouts or the tops of the Japanese radish. These are cooked and eaten with a kind of briny bean sauce. But the last resort of the most destitute is generally the enormous, white radish, which simply prepared and though scantily nutritious, affords them a meal.

This frugal mode of living is not so much from choice as of somewhat painful necessity. Japan, with the exception of the Hokkaido, a small area in the north, affords the beholder no fertile, American-like farms or the broad, rolling fields of grain of England or the Continent, for here the soil is naturally quite unfertile and fields very small, irregular, and running from the so-called paddy fields in well-kept terraces to almost halfway up the mountain side; then also it must ever be borne in mind that an immense tract of this mountainous country (eighty-six per cent) is totally unfit for agriculture, hence that which is available for tillage and cultivation is utilized to the last square yard: prodigies of toil—a sure sign of population pressure.

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But it is this unique picturesqueness which is the charm of Japan's rural scenery. The serpent-trail-like paths and narrow roads, often barely allowing a little cart to move along and forcing the occasional cyclist, coming from an opposite direction, to dismount and with wheel on his shoulder crawl down the embankment; the thatched huts or else grey, heavy-tiled farmhouses ordinarily pasted, as it were, in little village groups on the steep hillsides (since more suitable soil must be reserved for tillage), or else huddled together under persimmon trees or pine below a wooded knoll; here and there artificial ponds constructed for the purpose of irrigating; the little evergreen groves, which with a shady dome overhang the many wayside shrines, or else in some little nook of the road a few clusters of slender, polished bamboos; the old graveyards thickly set with moss-covered, rustic tombstones—appearing from a distance like a battalion of sturdy little Japanese soldiers guarding the silent dead; the banks of every little streamlet meandering down past terraces and slimy rice fields, lined with pines and other small growth which commonly form the centre support of slender and unique-shaped stacks, composed of neatly fixed-up bunches of rice and barley straw, reaching as high as thirty feet to the



CLUMSY RICE HULLER—IN CONSTANT USE

limbs—this often in the place of a barnyard; the whole country being made up of striking, miniature valleys and mountains, with the variety of climate found between Canada and Florida, where through the entire year the carefully fertilized fields, with almost magical rapidity, give birth to a harvest of barley and immediately again are turned into a paddy field, where young shoots of transplanted rice go to make the other main harvest of the second half year. All this combines to invariably create in the beholder a longing to put the scene on canvas.

But where the eye is ravished with delight, the olfactory organs are too often outraged. For the enriching of the soil, barnyard fertilizers and others made from fish are more or less utilized; then the city sewage is carted away to the rural districts, nightly and almost daily, by human labour—buxom red-cheeked farmer lassies often sharing in this toil. These processions leave an “aroma in their wake to which the native olfactory nerves seem to be proof,” but which to the sensitive Occidental denudes travelling in Japan’s urban sections of much of its enjoyment. Furthermore, in the interior the beauty of nature and the otherwise quaint and congenial habits of the simple peasant folk are not a little marred by the often unhoused and ill-smelling

latrines which profane the front of many country dwellings. The flowers and miniature landscape gardens, of course, must be in the back yard!

Besides rice and barley, there are also numerous by-products, such as a great variety of beans, sweet potatoes and especially radishes. These radishes are hauled in an almost interminable procession of cart loads to the seacoast towns, where they are either sold to residents there or shipped on to the cities. There is such a great demand for them that the fields are cleared of thousands of tons within a week or two. Rich and poor pickle them with salt in casks, after which, though not of the most pleasant odour, they serve as a table delicacy.

Thrashing is still done with the flail, or else the grain is drawn through a long, sharp-pronged instrument. In many sections the land is all cultivated by hand, or otherwise there is nothing used but the old-fashioned, one-handled plough, which the sandalled farmer may be seen lugging on his back along the narrow path to his little farm—a treasured heritage through many generations—driving before him a big-horned ox or a wiry, mischievous and unreliable little horse, which carries loads on his back, plods along in the mud of the paddy fields, and can thrive on food and treatment

which no other horse in the world could. For after fifty million people are fed from thirty-five hundred square miles of tillable land, none remains for meadows, and this little pony simply has to submit to a diet of coarse beans, barley and rice straw.

In certain sections, where even the excuse of a plough is rarely used, a three-pronged hoe is substituted. Some men stagger through the mud with baskets of fertilizer, others hoe, and women, not only knee-deep in the mire but with hands submerged to the elbows, fill up every uneven place and work the soil as their Occidental sister kneads the dough. When a field is fully smooth and mud-dikes all in trim, the farmer gets his bags of rice which, with streamers of white paper prayers floating over them, have for days been left water-soaked in the yard, and which he now scatters over the slimy and tiny patches.

Imagine a lot of men and women up to their knees in the cold mud of the rice fields, or out sowing barley on an area of twenty acres of land, with here and there a toiling ox adding more vivacity to the beehive. The whole looks like so many employees of one little plantation, rather than twenty or thirty different masters, with their wives, sons and daughters, following agriculture in the

twentieth century! But Western customs have begun to penetrate even into the rural districts. Here ox-carts and bicycles are equally in use; also now and then can be found a little gasoline engine, which may in time crowd out these enchanting water wheels, plied by rippling streamlets and miniature waterfalls, and displace the many old-fashioned foot mortars used to hull rice and barley, as well as the typical Oriental "upper and nether millstone," which may yet be found in nearly every dwelling.

Again, in their apparel the new and the old are strikingly exhibited. When coming to town in his best, the farmer may be adorned with either a new or second-hand, and often too large, felt hat, Japanese kimono with the lower ends turned up and fastened under his sash—probably intended to make more conspicuous a suit of Western underwear and a pair of Congress shoes. But still more curious the scene when these agriculturists take advantage of a rainy day, and in whole companies, while engaged in animated conversation, come marching tandem into town to do their trading. All smoke tiny pipes, looking like ordinary pencils at a distance. Their headgear is usually but a piece of thin towel-like twisted like a girdle around their heads. They either have a blanket over their shoulders, Indian-

fashion, or else a large sheet of yellow oiled paper. Some may come in various out-of-style overcoats, but all of them carry the picturesque umbrella—made of bamboo and paper, rendered waterproof by saturating it with a preparation of unripe persimmon juice.

To be alone for months and years in the interior amidst this thronging Asian life, at times seems most fearfully strange. Still these peasants, whose natural surroundings, not much unlike those of the Alpine dweller or the orange grower of sunny Sicily, tend to produce a more serene and kindly character than that of the daring and restless coast settlers, are very hospitable. The moment one reaches the margin of a seacoast town, the first man or child he meets turns on his heels and dashes down the street yelling "*Ee-jin*," which term, when applied to the foreigner, savours much more of disrespect than the abbreviation "*Jap*" to which this people so strenuously object. Be one a Christian preacher, or a salesman with some novel article, here is his crowd without the least effort. But when weary from his journey, in quest of a little *yadoya* at which to rest, the sooner the polite landlord takes him almost by force from the close contact of a staring and ill-smelling phalanx of old and young,

blind and seeing, clothed and otherwise, back into the cozy rear rooms facing the tiny garden, the better he is pleased.

But enter the farmer's abode, though ever so humble, and there is invariably placed near you a square cushion to sit upon and a wee cup of hot tea as a token of friendship. Let a stranger meet a crowd of stolid-faced youngsters en route to school or at play with their brothers or sisters on their backs, unlike the children of the town, these will make pleasing, respectful bows and otherwise offer the traveller their assistance. On the whole, these country folk, though rather slow and reticent, and on account of time-worn customs clinging more tenaciously to them, not so ready to embrace Christianity, when they once do so they make the more staunch supporters of the same.

XIX

THE GREY HOUSE AND ITS MAKER

THE exterior of the Japanese house always has an unfinished appearance. Never for hygiene or beauty is a coat of paint allowed to blend its soft colours with the manifold tints of nature around it. Though clean-looking when new, being unpainted, the ravages of time soon leave it a grey and dingy "barn." At times, however, to preserve the weatherboarding from rapid decay, the exterior side of the lumber is burned before using to an ugly, scorching black. There is something extremely fascinating about the maker of these domiciles. Like many other "things Japanese," the carpenter's methods also are much the opposite of those in the West. Not to speak disparagingly of our good American mechanics, the Japanese are certainly handy with tools. With catlike agility, and yet with seemingly little effort, they will work at tiny frail articles where a Westerner would be apt to find his nerves unstrung. We once looked into a large cooper shop and saw a lot of men sit-

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ting on the floor, working with both hands and feet like so many machines in a factory. While with chisel and hammer in hand they drove the hoops, their feet were constantly in the air, keeping the large half-barrel casks whirling like they were on pivots.

In Japan most articles are still wrought by hand, and though the carpenter or cabinet-maker should be engaged either in the construction of a large building or in making heavy furniture, yet is it altogether in contrast to the buzzing machinery of a modern factory, and the noisy whistles that wail like a "banshee" or howl like a dog. Indeed, when the carpenter begins to erect a building, there is considerable noise connected with preparing the foundation, but such noises are of a very pleasing nature. One day we heard a clamour of high-keyed voices near our house, like that of some men singing jubilantly at a picnic; they kept it up in the forenoon and in the afternoon, till, full of curiosity, we went to see what it meant, and found a gang of fat-faced coolies with a heavy block pounding the ground where large stones were to be placed for a foundation. One of these workmen would lead out in a singsong of a short stanza; when through, the others started their ditty, each one still

holding on to his rope, ready to lift the block, but the lifting came only after the song ceased.

At this stage the Shinto priest, wearing a black lacquered hat, comes on the scene. He squats on a straw mat in the centre of the space where the structure is to be erected. With a big duster-like implement composed of strands of pendent rice paper fastened to a stick, he dispels the demons and hobgoblins with which the place might have hitherto been infested. Now he runs a few bars on his flute, claps his hands and worships; then from a small, crude tray he sprinkles rice toward the four points of the compass, kneels again, and with his flat, shingle-shaped sceptre bestows his august benediction upon the site, bows very low and as quick as thought unceremoniously disappears from the expressionless crowd of workmen.

For the walls of a house very few girders are used and hardly any braces; hence it happens sometimes that the more common cottages soon begin to lean. Where the roof is of heavy tile, the timbers underneath, which support the rafters, are also very strong and, in fact, are the heaviest of the entire house. These crossbeams and sills are not sawed straight, but left as ornamental as nature made them. After these workmen have arranged

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the support for the uprights and placed them in position, it is that heavy, grey-tiled roof which demands their immediate attention.

Grey tiles! Here and everywhere from the kilns, that seem as numerous as the sacrificial altars of the gods, black smoke is towering the hazy skies. Chancing to pass such a typical "home of tiles," we proceed to the doorless entrance, and there under a low-eaved, straw-covered roof, find in a large space a few little men—some working a yellowish mud, some with wire cut uniform layers from a symmetrically squared ledge of soft clay, sever these into tile lengths and place them on curved moulds to be fashioned and dried. The master, with a few other men, squat on the dirt floor, trimming the product and adding the finishing touches; way at one end of the structure, the residence of the proprietor, in a little round straw basket is a darling, purple-faced, newly-born babe squealing lustily for its ruddy-cheeked mother, who with the grand-dame has been out stacking tiles into the kiln, and now comes in to soothe her firstborn. Well burned, the tile is tough and durable, has a shiny surface and is slate-coloured through and through; one dollar's worth will roof about six square feet.

The rafters for the roof are laid upon the heavy beams that are built into trusses one upon another in diminishing squares. On top of these rafters is placed a sheet of thin boards or a network of split bamboo, upon which, into a thick layer of pliable clay, the tile are closely fitted. When such a thoroughly strong and serviceable roof, that can not only resist the ravages of the sky but ought to well endure typhoons, is finished, the builder proceeds to complete the structure at his leisure. It may be months, perhaps years, before the walls and general interior appurtenances receive the necessary attention. In the meantime, however, the tenants have entered upon occupation.

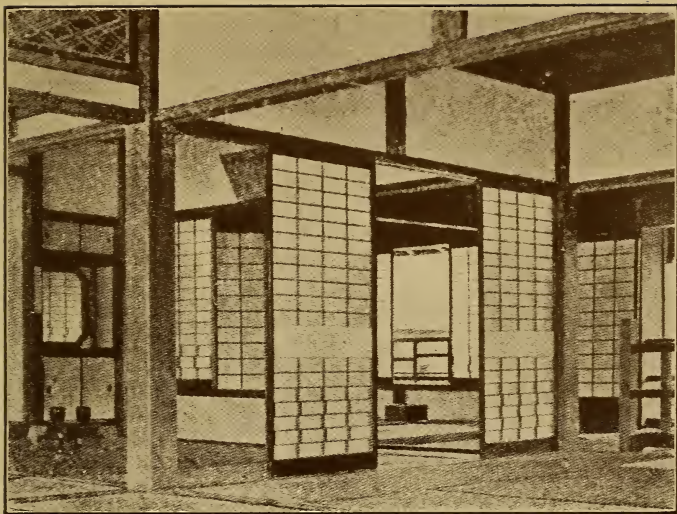
The houses which are covered with straw have strong bamboo poles for rafters; no nails are used, everything being tied with ropes; this is also the case in putting up scaffolding, etc. The framework of the lower walls is spiked with wooden pins. In the cities and larger towns, however, nails and locks, which are little known in the interior, have come into common use. For lighter articles, such as weatherboarding, as well as for the little woodwork inside, cedar is generally employed. When not convenient to obtain ready-sawed lumber from the dealer, the carpenter can play sawyer, and with

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a saw two feet in length and often over one foot wide, he can easily rip an old water-soaked cedar log into boards and strips. Where Western men working in lumber think it necessary to season it as soon as possible, in Japan splendid cedar logs are kept anchored in large rafts along the rivers or in ponds for years. Thus the wood retains its natural colour and beauty—this none will doubt when examining the lovely interior woodwork of the high-class dwellings, planed to a fault, but never painted and rarely oiled.

The Japanese carpenter needs no workbench, and well for him, since space is such a valuable commodity. He can do a great deal of work sitting on the ground. It is very amusing and instructive to watch him planing a board, pulling the plane toward him, and instead of a vice, the board simply set against a peg is easily steadied with his toes. That the Japanese have to hold their wooden clogs on with their two largest toes, probably accounts for these members being almost as useful as some Westerners' thumb and forefinger. Imagine a carpenter sawing boards over his lap, and putting up cabinet drawers holding the boards between his toes.

Whatever this carpenter cannot do, he can at



INTERIOR OF JAPANESE HOUSE



THE AGILE LITTLE CARPENTER

least evince much patience and a marvellous degree of skill in planing the most cross-grained and knotty board to a polish. Some of his tools are of a Western type, others are ingeniously native. One of the much-used tools is the adz, with which, when two or three men are edging a log, their strokes are alternate and as regular in measure as when they hammer nails, or when the farmers thrash with flail, or a few coolies pound rice *mochi*, or a gang of four or five section hands work their picks just as uniformly as a squad of soldiers shoulder their guns, take aim, fire, etc. But all such mechanical exertions quite often come to a sudden end, and tiny pipes are leisurely puffed, tea drunk and stories told in genuine Oriental fashion.

XX

THE JAPANESE "YADOYA"

WHILE tea-houses and inns, like ordinary residences, are usually one-storied, hotels are commonly two-story structures with flags and gay lanterns hanging in front. Upon arrival, the baggage is speedily taken in by a number of willing pairs of hands. "Honourably condescend to come in," shouts the landlord and all the maids, who have already, by their extremely low bows, made a wedge into the visitor's favour. Glancing above him, he may see two rows of red lanterns strung before the *kami-dana*—god shelf—where amid lights and sacrificial dishes stand a number of fox gods. Various other venerated idol images of good luck, etc., are fastened to the wall in conspicuous places. No soiled footwear may touch those clean white mats, and hence are at once exchanged for a pair of indoor slippers, which are worn on the polished corridor leading past many rooms and up a steep stairway, until

the guest reaches his apartment, where even these are removed.

There is no continuation of walls about the house nor in the division of rooms, of which there are many on both floors. But whatever little walling there may be is all built of a network of bamboo lath on which brown mud mixed with chopped straw is plastered. To give this all the attractiveness possible, a coat of whitewash or some other colouring is applied. Instead of outer walls facing the garden or street, there are the *amado*—rain doors, which in the daytime are shoved in their grooves to a corner of the building. There still remain the three-foot-wide *shoji*, covered with translucent rice paper, so that the rooms are comfortably illumined with softened sunlight. The partitions are composed of similar-sized opaque paper panels called *fusuma*, whose crinkled green or sky-blue surface is splashed with gold. Sometimes they are decorated with drawings in India ink of Japan's rural scenes or characters of by-gone days. These panels, without the least trouble, can be lifted out of their grooves and the whole floor transformed into one room.

The floors of each little chamber are covered with uniform-sized thick mats made of rushes per-

fectly fitted together and leaving no interstices. These houses, as well as their stolid-looking little denizens, are simple in appearance and, in a way, delightful bits of ornamentation. The hotel furniture is conspicuous by its absence; no table nor chair, perhaps not even a hat rack. We squat on a cushion in front of the indispensable brazier where water in a little, antique-fashioned iron teakettle is everlastingly boiled. As the coals die down, the hotel maid with deft fingers shifts the embers with brass tongs shaped like chopsticks. Immediately, insipid, lemon-coloured tea and little cakes are served on a lacquer tray.

In the city the kitchen is quite a large, open place, through which everybody, from the master down to the cheapest coolie, may stroll. In the little country hotel, however, this part is more or less a haunted-looking abode, with wall and rafters blackened with soot and smoke. Sitting in our room, we clap our hands (instead of the call bell), whereupon a chorus of voices from the kitchen and everywhere screeches "*Hai-i*," and by and by there comes the heavy step of chubby feet pattering along the polished hall floor. Getting an order for supper, with a forced smile and low bow and much sucking in of the breath—a sign of great respect and po-

liteness—the little maid, who acts as cook, errand boy, bath keeper, house cleaner, etc., informs us that the bath is ready, as it is the custom of all guests to avail themselves of that luxury at the first opportunity.

Japanese baths are a speciality, and the only unpleasant feature about them is that the water is so seldom changed. One big tub full has to serve for many bathers; but there is one redeeming feature—all take a preliminary soap and water scrub outside the tub. Then they get into the bath and soak for at least fifteen minutes in water of about 110 degrees. Of course there are many hundreds of public bathhouses in every city; also the more well-to-do have their private bathrooms. But in the rural districts, where these are not available, be it night or day, the family promiscuously and ostentatiously take their tub into the yard or even close to the public road, provided no policeman prowls about.

On one such occasion, being among the first guests, we descended the broad stairway and availed ourselves of the steaming bath. The water, not yet having reached more than a hundred degrees, felt very enjoyable. Soon another guest, a young soldier, was with us in the huge tank—to

this we dared not object in the Orient—but to our horror we discovered that this bathing tank was used promiscuously by both sexes, so made a hasty exit. That such a habit is customary everywhere in Japan would not be a correct statement, but to enter any ordinary reputable lodging, one is never positively sure that he will not meet with similar experiences. But these people seem far less concerned about this "malady of Orientalism"—disregard for privacy and what is in their minds overdrawn Western modesty—than they are about their notion of cleanliness.

Passing a number of rooms, through slightly opened *shoji* we observed some of the guests engaged in playing Japanese chess, others in storytelling; the *geisha* twanged on the *samisen*, and others, from shallow cups, were drinking hot *sake*, which from appearances had already turned their heads. Supper was served in our room on a lacquered tray placed on the matting; the dishes, mostly beautifully lacquered wooden bowls with covers of a like artistic pattern, were deftly arranged after rigid table etiquette. In the left corner of the tray was a small bowl of rice; on the right a wooden bowl of *miso* soup, containing strips of radish, edible seaweed, for which the coast waters

are raked and strained, also bean curd and egg-plant.

But there seems to be no end of soups—fish and clam soups, the latter usually served with the shells; they are all flavoured with *soy* sauce, which also enters into almost all other dishes. A small plate of pickled vegetables occupied the farther left corner of the tray; in the remaining corner a nice piece of broiled fish, with a dab of grated radish and mustard and a boiled yellow chrysanthemum. Sometimes the fish is roasted, and when the fat melts and drops into the fire, volumes of oily smoke emit a fearful smell throughout the entire neighbourhood.

Again, raw fish served in thin slices, is a dish to which the Japanese are very partial. Not so with the Westerner, but one might eat an egg fried which would by no means pass muster raw; even so with fish. Then again we eat oysters raw—why not other kinds of fish? But we must not fail to mention another side dish on the tray—a pickled eel with a tiny cup of sweetened beans, a mushroom and other fungi. The eel was split from gill to tail and the head and backbone removed. Crabs, shrimps, lobsters, cuttlefish or octopus, coated with flour and fried in rape oil or boiled in *soy*, are

favourite dishes. Besides sweet potatoes and a variety of vegetables, bamboo shoots, bulbs of tiger lilies, indigestible rhizome of the lotus, as well as other unheard-of delicacies, have a place in the larder. But one's gastronomic cravings are completely outraged when the landlord, in extremity, rushes a tough rooster of too long experience into the menu.

Poor peasants, however, can partake of pickles, salted fish, and any kind of "broth of abominable things," or patronize the travelling restaurant which we passed en route to this *yadoya*. Many poor mortals, finding it hard to buy a morsel of rice, resort to this cheap macaroni restaurant. "Did this vendor get his supplies from the manufacturer whom I saw kneading his dough on a straw mat with his feet?" we wondered. Dipping ball after ball of these slippery strings into boiling water and again in succession into separate bowls, he added a sprinkling of cheap *soy* and green onion cuttings, and sticking into them the crudest kind of chopsticks, presented them to his miscellaneous customers. Sturdy coolies leaving their cart shafts, haggard women releasing loads of boxes and bundles from their backs, also a lot of chil-

dren with great rapidity bolted down this seething mess.

But in one point they were not unlike our festive neighbours in the adjoining room at the *yadoya*. Their noisy gulplings and much gurgling and sucking in of the breath while eating, though ever so distressing to us, we rather excused when remembering that in their minds it only shows a polite appreciation of the food. The hotel maid who ladles out the rice from a cylindrical wooden tub may chance to be a most amiable conversationalist, but woe betide the foreigner who, awkwardly handling his chopsticks, must satisfy his hunger while the waitress, as though asphyxiated, sits confronting him with one prolonged gaze. But, mustering courage, one finds great delight in the art and beauty of Japanese simplicity, of which the woodwork of these little drawing-rooms furnish an example. The long carved transoms above the partitions of my room contain lovely patterns of fabulous beasts and flowers. The posts and lintels of the alcove—a knotty sapling or gnarly, slim tree trunk, simply peeled of its bark and varnished, or again planed to a polish and unvarnished, as is nearly always the case—reveal the deft hand of the woodworker.

In this alcove, called *tokonoma*, hang two well-mated *kakemono*—wall pictures—a painting on white silk of lanky storks on the seashore with the rising sun above; again a blossoming branch of cherry or racemes of purple wistaria, dexterously executed, may be found in the better hotels. The low ceilings are of thin cedar boards, between which and the upper floor, ugly, daring rats scamper and squeal while we partake of our meal. These marauders may as likely as not make their bed on your very pillow. Amusement and consternation may at times seize a worshipping congregation when over the preacher's head a troop of rats thunder across the ceiling.

At night, parlour and dining-room are transformed into sleeping apartments. Ordinary travellers are given a room to themselves, but in the cheaper hotels the Japanese, in order to secure lower rates, often sleep as many men or women in a compartment as can find room on the mats. Handy is that little closet from which the maid jerks those thick-padded quilts, but this is one of the most unhygienic practices in the Sunrise Kingdom, for no sooner has the sleeper risen in the morning than these *futon*, which are both bed and covering, are again packed into the dingy closet, and thus seldom

enjoy an airing. With but few exceptions, these mouldy quilts contain a plague of unpleasant odours, which to the uninitiated are simply suffocating. The maid spreads them on the floor, places a cylinder-shaped pillow, stuffed with sawdust or beans at our disposal, and bows, saying, "Honourably condescend to rest," and leaves the room.

Between the quilts there is a pair of altogether too narrow sheets; but this deficiency we supply from our parcels, also a rubber pillow. The other necessary article of bedding is that green mosquito netting suspended from the corners of the room. The covers feel more like planks than blankets, yet "for a' that" sleep would be deemed a luxury were it not for those ravenous fleas which until dawn contend with us over the ownership of a little life-blood.

If by good fortune one's room is at the end of the building, where he may slightly open the rain doors, well; if not, he must submit to the inevitable. The meagre comforts of these hotels are marred, if not entirely offset, by the abominable odours of the seldom disinfected latrines which are a part of the house and near the guests' rooms. What a disgrace to the much-vaunted cleanliness of the Japanese.

Vitiated air from the transoms of the neighbours, whose ill-smelling lamps are operating full time, manufacturing carbonic acid gas, produce visions of ghosts and gruesome bacteria. To all this add a volume of screeching and jerking discords from the *samisen* of the *geisha*, entertaining a party of hand-clapping revellers in the adjoining rooms, and wonder not that we reel and toss and long for the morning.

But though this hotel lacks the convenience of the public parlour of the West, when host, clerks and maids treat the guest for the time being, and so far as exterior appearances are concerned, as one of the members of the family, even though this be done but for the fee, this in some degree compensates for other defects. The male servants greet you with a smile; the hostess always bows; the maid brings your meals, cleans the room, prepares and clears the bed, runs necessary errands for you, serves tea to your callers, etc. Compared with such usage, how cold is the hotel counter and how perfunctory the porters in the West, the Japanese thinks. One registers his name as before a judge, and is then given a key and "led to a sleeping cell by a boy in uniform."

The reader must understand that this is a de-

scription of the average Japanese hotel off from the beaten track, and represents the overwhelming majority of those which yet cling to the ancient ways of Nippon, rather than the few that attempt to imitate the West.

XXI

OVER THE TEACUP

IT was after a terrific rainstorm in May, when the winds had scattered the last vestige of purple wistaria blossoms, now lying washed up in drifts near the little tea-houses. The afternoon sun broiled down on our heads, and Mr. Kimura addressed us apologetically, as though he was responsible for the enervating climate of his island home: "Honourably hot it has deigned to be." "Must be such poison to your august spirit," Mrs. Kimura added.

Mr. Kimura was a very congenial and most obliging companion; he was dressed in Japanese garb, except for the little felt hat perched slightly to one side of his head; gold-washed spectacles bridged his nose, and while unconsciously playing his tiny soft fingers on a fancy bamboo cane as he complacently listened to my conversation, we noticed that all this time he kept the little finger motionless. And little wonder, you would have thought,

had you seen that ugly curved nail grown two inches long. To him it was an ornament—though an ancient custom; to us, however, it conveyed the fact that he belonged to the sort of gentry yet extant, whose unwritten rules forbid manual labour as degrading. Travelling pedestrians, here and there a hollow-chested old sire, perhaps accompanied by the wife of his youth—now a stooped, panting *oba-san*, with a sprinkling of younger life on a short holiday, were sitting on their heels in these *chaya*, sipping tea. Our Japanese friends could not resist the temptation, and we of course yielded. A little rest beneath covers of reed and trellised ivy at the busy city's edge must not be despised.

Mr. Kimura spied a lady friend of his mother perched alone on a low wide bench covered with a red blanket. Dashing in that direction, with a full-orbed smile they accosted this elderly lady, and ere we could count two, were engrossed in the extremely tedious rites of salutation which perhaps only the Japanese can be guilty of. The lady on the seat bent forward with her nose on the blanket, while the two standing like jack-knives doubled their forms—that is, every time both sides made a bow which was drawn out and solemnly polite. “When will they get through?” we thought.

The greeting began with a remark about the weather; then a solicitous inquiry concerning the health—and one side quicker than the other suavely rejoined, “Through your honourable *shadow*, I am very well;” the next bow was burdened by mutual apologies for neglecting to call for such a weary long time, though afterward I learned that they had met just the week before. Next both sides not only raked up the gifts and favours received at recent dates, but from the deep recesses of their minds conjured up some service either parents or grandparents had obtained even years ago. Such matters were duly acknowledged with great gratitude expressed in the politest possible terms, and then also responded to with a lengthy and polished equivalent of “Don’t mention it.” In a faultless manner these movements were repeated until our ears became deaf to their greetings and we seemed to look on toy figures mechanically in motion. We could only think of aching backs and giddy heads!

At last the two were coaxed to discard their clogs and squat on the bench, while the foreigner preferred gluing himself to the edge. Though early in the season, fans had already come into use; the tiny one handed to Mrs. Kimura she declined in

words that seemed like dumping a heart full and overflowing with thanks into the lap of her lady friend, saying in Japanese superlatives that it was perfectly delightful and refreshingly cool. We were inclined to agree with her when looking through the streamer of red lanterns hanging under the eaves, out upon the wooded hills bathed in the richest indigo colouring.

The group of slatternly women gossiping near the smoky side door of the adjoining *chaya* appeared very conspicuous in their contrast to the young lassie who brought us our tea. She was sparing of words and gentle as the zephyr in her manners. A few trickling drops of tea sipped from tiny cups and a little assortment of cakes covered with white, green, yellow or pink sugar—looking prettier than they tasted—helped to break the monotony, while the two ladies in mincing fashion carried on a brisk conversation.

Glancing around, we saw the elder of the two empty her little metal pipe by pounding it on the rim of the iron brazier and leisurely refill it from her silk-covered tobacco pouch, which was an effective suggestion for my companions to disfigure their mouths with cigarettes. Just then a blind *massageur*, one of the many of this profession,

blowing a bamboo whistle, and with the aid of a cane, with an unsteady tread, partly due to his high-cleated *geta*, passed the tea-house.

From the open *shoji* of a stuffy rear room came a gruff male voice commanding the docile young waitress to call in that *amma-san*. Looking a little more closely, we observed a promiscuous crowd in all attitudes of ease and repose on the mats, munching food and smoking, while in a farther corner this patient, seemingly distressed with rheumatism, and with not too much passiveness, waited for the blind man to feel his way to the rear. To get as vigorous a treatment as possible and also the full value of the three cents fee, the old man dropped his kimono, the only vestige of covering on his back, down to his hips, and the sallow-faced *massager* with his fists began to systematically maul the shoulders and other pain-affected parts; quite exhausted, he rested his hands while digging his elbows into his patient's ribs or rubbing them briskly over the body. Then a succession of lighter touches with the flat hands began to favourably tell on the old man, who sprawled over sideways on the mat, and the sonorous snortings that reached our ears indicated that he had gone to slumberland. That these professionals are patronized by all, from the Em-

peror down to the lowest coolie, proves what a necessary adjunct the *massageur* is to Japanese life.

"You've witnessed the tea ceremony?" Mr. Kimura inquired as he filled our thimble from a typical Japanese teapot with hollow handle at right angles to the spout. "We have, sir." "And how did you like it?" he asked again. "An intricate production," we replied. "The guests, formally sitting on their heels like immovable stocks, while the hostess puts a small quantity of powdered tea into the bowl which is used for this occasion, pouring hot water into it and stirring it with a bamboo whisk, and then waiting on each one of the guests in their turn, who must drain the bowl in so many number of sips, no less and no more; the number and kinds of bows made before and after drinking; in short, the every movement and sound to be in accordance with some great unwritten law of the ancients; all this, sir, we consider a vastly complicated art." "But you enjoyed it, did you not?" "We did not," we confessed, "and that for more than one reason. One is, we are ever under a strain and fear of making some exasperating and mirth-provoking blunder, not much unlike the one committed by one of our intimate Japanese friends

unacquainted with foreign table etiquette. Returning home rather late one day, after the rest of the family had already dined, this friend, a prominent official in that country town, just arrived at the front door behind us, we cordially begged him to enter the dining-room and share in the repast. 'No, thanks,' he repeated; and stating 'that the honourable interior is already full,' indicated that he had indeed partaken of his noon meal at home. But a little more coaxing gained the point. Nicely seated, and not aware that Japanese custom insists on 'all that is set before you, eat,'—we passed him a large dish of kidney beans, entreating him to help himself. With a graceful bow he placed the dish beside his plate and with the large serving spoon proceeded to eat the whole. With an excruciating effort I suppressed my laughter; we however could not prevail upon our friend to partake of any desserts. All he could utter was '*Ippai! ippai!!*' (full) and pat his stomach." "Very interesting," Mr. Kimura remarked, but rather willing to change the subject, continued, "And do you know that to-day the tea ceremony is taught in most Girls' Schools?" "Yes, and it must greatly tend to cultivate that calm and sedate gracefulness in the young ladies," we made answer; "otherwise also good

enough for the palmy days of Old Nippon, but for the twentieth century too much of a time-killer."

"Ah, we Japanese will never surrender such a long-cherished institution." "Well, the names of ancient sires celebrated for popularizing this art may be household words; those uniform-sized, nine-foot-square tea rooms found among many rich throughout your country may have some very historical connections—the oldest of these rooms we had the privilege of seeing in an antiquated temple—but please give us something more potent, more up to date."

Nodding his head sideways like a sparrow, so characteristic of the Japanese when puzzled, he slowly droned, "*So desu ne*," a noncommittal expression which may either denote assent or dissent; then more animatedly he continued, "At this time the tea pickers are busy on the large plantations only about fifteen miles by train from here; how about going there in the morning?" "All right, Mr. Kimura, we shall accompany you with pleasure," we replied.

We found this the most favourable time to obtain an instructive peep at tea-growing. In the Yama-shiro district, and especially the country about Uji,

the plantations are considered the best in the Empire. Where a comparatively large portion of the tillable land is utilized for rice crops, here the tea gardens are the one great source of wealth to this section. This industry may be said to extend from 39 deg. N. lat. southward over all the Japanese islands. But while in many places tea is more or less cultivated for little else than local consumption, there seem to be but a few regions where it can be grown to much profit.

Running into the district of Uji, the valleys and way up the gently sloping hills looked from a distance like a veritable sand waste. But a closer view suddenly revealed this to be mats and layers of straw with which the tea gardens during April and May are covered in order to preserve the leaves bleached and tender.

“Is tea indigenous to Japan?” we asked Mr. Kimura. “No,” he said. “Like as the science of making Satsuma ware and the erection of artistic temples were introduced from Korea, I must also acknowledge that the tea plant was brought from China in the ninth century by a Buddhist monk.”

“Black tea from India and China is largely exported to Europe, is it not?” “Yes, and the Japanese product, almost exclusively a green variety, has



PICTURESQUE TEA PICKERS

its principal market in America," he proudly answered. Few seem to realize that tea is the daily beverage and an important food auxiliary of at least half the world's population. The Japanese in particular are tea epicures, and in 1906 that country alone exported four hundred million dollars' worth.

A hospitable plantation owner, although so busy that attire seemed to have become well-nigh useless, still found time to serve us a refreshing beverage from leaves picked and dried on the spot a few days before—a privilege very few "tea toppers" enjoy. "From all I've seen, it appears that tea manufacture in this country, instead of being confined to big establishments, is mostly handled by little households," we observed. "Quite true," our friendly host replied.

Where in other climes the leaves are picked three or four times annually, in Japan this usually takes place but once. These little ball-shaped shrubby trees, three or four feet tall, when in uniform rows covering the bald, bleak hills, would be of great value even though it were only for their singular decorative effects; when the shrubs are in bloom, myriads of fragrant, wax-like flowers of a creamy white, twinkling like snowflakes on an emerald

background, exceedingly enhance their beauty. A monstrous jet-black bull standing diametrically in our road forced us to halt, and while conversing with his indulgent master, I asked how early the first crop may be gathered from these plants. "Oh, they yield from three years old to three hundred," he casually replied.

The black man in the cotton fields, or the fruit-gatherers of sunny Italy, can hardly produce as picturesque a scene as these tea pickers, whose chatter is as joyful as that of the vintage workers down the valleys of the Rhine and the Rhone. Thousands of young lassies and wrinkled-faced *Oba-sans*, each with a big bamboo basket, can be seen under these straw roofs or else on the outskirts of a garden, plucking the tender shoots with the leaf-buds and expanding leaves which alone are gathered for tea manufacture.

These women, whose kimono and coiffure are already so unique, whether found stooping on the plantation or homeward bound with a harvest on their shoulders, as they come in flocks like sheep down the narrow roads, with a strip of snow-white towelling invariably gathered in deft folds on their shining black hair, beneath which, from a grinning face, a pair of artful eyes and often ebony-dyed

teeth appear, present a most vivid and never-to-be-forgotten picture.

Where in the preparation of black tea the leaves are exposed to the sun and air and treated like hay in order that an incipient saccharine fermentation may be produced, green tea is subjected to a more rapid process. No sooner have the pickers dumped their harvest into gigantic bamboo trays than it is dipped, batch for batch, by means of a sieve, into a cauldron of steaming water, exposed for a moment to a brisk heat, then spread on a big table and with mechanical fans rapidly cooled. In this mashy condition it is thinly scattered on frames covered with sheets of leathery paper, placed over a charcoal fire and for two or three minutes gently but swiftly worked until completely dried.

The colour of the genuine green tea is entirely due to the rapid drying of the fresh leaves, which prevents the chlorophyll from undergoing any alteration. Immediately it is hustled to a number of tables, where most scantily dressed men give it an energetic rolling between their hands. Batches of women, squatted on their heels around low tables here and there, do the assorting and preparing for the market.

“You seem singularly contented,” we remarked

to a group of tea gatherers, as they loitered in the shade of luxurious bamboos by the roadside. "Yes, but the season continues for only twenty days," they answered with an air of regret. "But what are your wages?" To this a chubby, masculine-featured woman, speaking for all, pointed to some, and then again to others, saying, "These get fifteen cents and those up to thirty cents per day."

"And what about last year's tea?" we asked an elderly, iron-jointed master with his kimono front wide open down the neck and a huge mushroom-shaped hat shading his brow, and whose every pulse-beat yet vibrated with the spirit of the once exclusive Japan. "Seldom much left over," he gruffly answered. "The *I-jin-San* (Mr. Barbarian) would not buy old tea."

"Then, Mr. Kimura," we said as he accompanied us to the railway station, "perhaps not a little of this old tea is consumed in this country." "Not only that," he replied, "the poor people must often content themselves with an infusion of coarse leaves and sorted-out stems." But when the car wheels began to revolve, my obliging friend made one more charming bow, and shouted, "A cup of *Shapanese* tea, *Banzai!!*"

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